

Read: John 9:1-7,13-17,34-39

Jesus Uses Bad for Good

John 9:1-3

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As a baby, he never looked up at a colorful toy hanging over his crib. As a boy, he never kept his eye on the ball so he could hit it with a bat. He might have felt the warmth of the sun on his face, but he never saw the paintbrush of God fill the sky with reds and purples at the end of the day. The man was blind.

Why? Was he blind because he was being punished for something bad he or his parents did? It seems to make sense that if someone does bad things, bad things will happen to him or her, right? Today, many still believe that accidents happen because God is getting them back for the wrong they had done. “Why?” is often asked after bad experiences. Why did the pet sea turtle have to die? Why do bones break so casts have to be worn, especially during the summer? “It doesn’t seem fair! It isn’t right! What did I do to deserve this?” might be screamed.

In today’s devotion, Jesus said that the blindness wasn’t because of any sin the man or his parents had done. The man was born blind so that God could flex his almighty muscles in his life. Jesus taught his disciples that through challenges and bad experiences God does some of his most amazing work.

Why does God allow bad things to happen? He isn’t punishing you but is wanting to do his amazing work in your life, and especially in your heart.

After the blind man washed off the mud Jesus had put on his eyes, he saw for the first time smiling faces, green trees, and the brightness of the sun. But the man was still blind. Sure, his eyeballs worked but the eyes of faith were still closed. He couldn’t identify or see who his Savior was. The man was lost! That is, until Jesus found him.

Jesus took away the blindness from his eyes so that God could take away the blindness from his heart. When the man saw Jesus and believed him to be God, he didn’t complain or ask why he had to be blind for many years, instead he worshiped Jesus as Lord. The man saw Jesus with his eyes in this life for a little while, but he will see glory forever because he saw Jesus as Lord with his eyes of faith.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- “I spy with my little eye ... what?!” (*Play 1 round!*) What are you thankful for that your eyes saw today? (*Think of the most beautiful thing!*)
- How do you know God loves you even when bad things happen?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- How does the cross teach us that we don't need to fear being punished by God for sin?
- What can you pray when bad and scary things happen and you can't figure out why?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- How can worshiping God during really difficult times bring us comfort and strength?
- *Discuss.* Jesus doesn't always give us an answer to our needs, but he always wants to be the answer.

Closing Prayer:

Lord God, thank you for the physical health that we do have. Heal us according to your will and plan. When we are challenged in this life, help us to trust that your plan is to bless us by giving us the opportunity to trust in you. Thank you for giving us the eyes of faith that see you, Jesus, as our Savior. Amen.