

## Found by Jesus

HN/SS 17/07/05 am

Reading: Psalm 56, Ephesians 1

Study Text: John 9:35-38

Sing Psalms: 25:1-5, 25:16-22, 27:4-6a, 130:5-8

If only I had better health I would be able to do this or that. If only I had more money life would be so much easier. This is how many people think. But the truth is that such things may well bring more sorrow. King Hezekiah was sick and about to die. He wept bitterly and prayed to God. God healed him and gave him another 15 years of life. And what did he do? He sinned by showing off his treasures to envoys from the king of Babylon (Isaiah 38).

The man born blind was wonderfully healed by Jesus. For the first time in his life he could see the world around him. All he could do before was sit and beg. What great opportunities were open to him now he could see! Life would be so much better! But what happened? After interrogation by the Pharisees he was cast out of the assembly. He was excluded from the community of God's people.

After being cast out he must have wondered if he was any better off in this world now that he could see. Jesus took pity on him and opened his eyes. But others called him a sinner and cast him out. He must have been bewildered man.

## Found

Jesus did not leave him wondering for very long. He heard that they had cast this poor man out of the assembly and went searching for him. Jesus in his grace and power had opened the eyes of this blind man. But this was not the end of what Jesus would do for him. He would open his spiritual eyes. He would bring him to see not just this world but the world that is the kingdom of heaven.

*The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost* (Luke 19:10). Zacchaeus was neither blind nor poor. He was rich but he had no peace in heart. He was lost just like this poor man that Jesus healed. Jesus came to give peace to such troubled hearts – the peace of God. He came to bring men out of darkness into light. Jesus is the light of the world.

John does not go into detail about how or when Jesus found this man whom he had healed. But it does seem to have been soon after he was cast out. All we are told is that he found him – and that is the most important thing. The man did not go searching for Jesus; rather Jesus came seeking this man and he found him.

'I was found by Jesus' this man could say. 'I once was lost but now am found' wrote John Newton. Can you say the same thing? Many like to tell us about how they found Jesus. They tell about the day they went forward and gave their life to Jesus. While it is essential that we believe just as this man did, it is also essential to understand that it is Jesus who found us and not us who found Jesus.

This poor man did not know where Jesus was and he had little hope of finding him. He did not even know who Jesus was. Jesus graciously came and found him. Listen to what other Scriptures tell us. *You did not choose me but I chose you and appointed you* said Jesus (15:16). *He chose us in him*

*before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:4). While we were yet sinners Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).*

Having found him what did Jesus do – what did he say? The man must have been very upset and distraught at being ostracized and cast out from the community. He was in need of counselling we might have thought. ‘Tell me how you feel. You are the victim of a terrible injustice but I know you have the inner strength to overcome this setback and to go and achieve higher things’. Is this how Jesus approached this poor man? No.

Did Jesus commend him for his faithful witness to the truth? He had stood firm under interrogation by the religious leaders, bearing testimony to the power and integrity of Jesus. Surely Jesus would have a word of commendation, even a reward for this poor man.

This was the message we kept hearing after the recent death of the Pope. He lived such a good and faithful life, upholding the traditions of the Church and helping so many people. Surely he will be well rewarded in heaven. Not content to leave such heavenly matters to the Lord, they have decided to fast track his rise to sainthood. Men in the Church of Rome have judged him worthy to receive a heavenly reward.

But Jesus did not commend this honest man for his faithful witness. He simply asked him one question – *do you believe in the Son of God*. This is one of few places where Jesus uses this title – in fact many MSS have the more usual title ‘Son of Man’. Both titles point to the divinity of Jesus. The Son on Man title is found in Daniel 7:13 where we read of him coming on the clouds of heaven – *he came to the Ancient of Days*. From John 3:16 we know that – *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son*.

The question soon became ‘do you believe in me’, for Jesus went on to reveal himself as the One sent by God into this world. *You have both seen him and it is he who is talking with you*. These words remind us the great self disclosure of Jesus to the Samaritan woman – *I who speak to you am he*.

Jesus graciously revealed himself to those who were ready to listen, those who were ready to believe. How tragic the words of the Jews appear in the light of this revelation. *If you are the Christ tell us plainly* they demanded (10:24). Jesus had told them clearly but they would not believe. While others doubted this man believed.

How awesome it was for this man to stand in the presence of the Son of God. He did not see a burning bush or a fire on the mountain as Moses and his forefathers had seen. He saw the Word become flesh, the Son of God in human form. And he heard his voice. It was not the loud trumpet like voice that Moses heard. But it was a voice that spoke with authority and with power. The words of Jesus pierced the soul of this man. He would never be the same again after hearing the truth from the very lips of the Son of God.

## **Faith**

The words of Jesus did not fall on deaf ears. They fell on ears that hear. They touched a heart that had been softened by the grace and power of Jesus. Hearing the words of Jesus this man made a wonderful profession of faith. *Lord I believe*. He saw, he heard, and he believed. He believed in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

When called to believe in the Son of God this man wanted to know who this person was. *Who is he Lord/Sir, that I may believe in him.* Just how much this man knew about Jesus at this point in time we cannot be sure. He had heard some things spoken about Jesus and had actually heard his voice – the voice that told him to go and wash. He probably recognized that same caring voice. Jesus did not keep him in the dark as to who the Son of God is.

Faith is of no use unless it has some object and an object that is worthy of faith. Faith in a man-made philosophy will not save. Faith in some created thing will not save. Yet this is what we see men commending one another for. Communism, humanism, environmentalism, feminism and so on and so forth. There are so many great causes and people devote their lives to such things. But how do such things benefit the soul? Such beliefs cannot save from sin and death?

This man did not believe in himself, or the power of the state, or the power of science. He believed in the Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The one who had the power to open his eyes, he now believed had power to save his soul. *If you confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved* (Romans 10:9). This is this good news that you have heard.

## **Freedom**

What joy came to the life of this man when his physical eyes were opened! But that joy was short lived. The Pharisees refused to believe what he said and cast him out. When Jesus found him and he believed in Jesus his spiritual eyes were opened and he saw life beyond this world. He received eternal life.

He no longer needed to go to the temple to worship. He belonged to the kingdom of Heaven. There and then he fell down and worshipped Jesus. Mere men were not going to stop him from worshipping God. They could exclude him from the temple but they could not stop him worshipping God, worshipping Jesus the Son of God.

Worship is the appropriate response when we are found by Jesus and profess faith in him. We come today to thank Jesus and to praise him for who he is and what he has done in saving us from sin. If people have no desire or no time to worship Jesus today then why should they think they will go to heaven and enjoy eternity there? For in heaven all creatures are engaged in worshipping the lamb upon the throne day and night.

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