

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, IL
Rev. Martin Eden

Lent 4
Saturday, March 14, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 15, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

“The Light of the World”

John 9:1-41

Our Gospel reading today is a very lengthy discourse much like what we heard last week with the Samaritan woman at the well, and is twice as long as what we heard two weeks ago with Jesus speaking with Nicodemus. I really appreciate how the creators of the lectionary series tie these three lengthy Gospel readings together.

The blind man we hear of today was blind from birth. He was born blind. Remember that Jesus told Nicodemus that unless he is born anew, born of water and the spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

The first reaction to seeing this man by Jesus’ disciples is to assume that it was due to some sin committed by him or his parents that caused this “Karma” to befall him. The idea that what you receive in life is what you deserve for what you have done. That is a very common view across many cultures and religions. But that is not how our Lord operates.

Jesus tells them that this was not because of sin, but so that the works of God might be displayed. And how does God do His work. He works through the Means of Grace – God’s Word and Sacraments.

Jesus goes to this blind man, announces who He is, “I am the Light of the world.” Don’t believe anyone who claims that Jesus never said He was the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus told Nicodemus that He was the Son of Man, a popular name for the Messiah, who descended from heaven. As we saw last week, when the Samaritan woman spoke of the Messiah, Jesus says, “I who speak to you am He.”

Jesus, being God, conducts His healing works using physical means which seem unnecessary, but are meaningful and further prepare His disciples for the Sacramental life of the church. Like with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, the healing is connected with water. In this case, the water is saliva from Jesus’ mouth. He spits on the ground (pteuw in the Greek). From the mouth of the Lord, water is applied to the dust of the earth in order to make things new. Jesus “anointed” his eyes – in the Greek epichristen, He christened his eyes. We refer to Baptism as a christening. You are “Christed”. The blind man is then told to go and wash in the pool of Siloam – which means Sent. In the Greek, apostalmenos from where we get the word “apostle.” The ones who are sent.

So taking water (from the mouth of God) and dust (just like when He first formed Adam), He christened his eyes and He says go and be washed in the water of the apostles. He washes; he returns; and he is no longer blind. He can see. The overtones of Baptism are everywhere in John’s Gospel.

Nicodemus was told that he must be born of water and the Spirit. The Samaritan woman at the well was offered “living water” by Jesus. Two days later,

her entire village believed because of the Word which proceeded from the mouth of the Lord.

It seems a day or two after Jesus healed the blind man, the Pharisees had a much less positive reaction to Jesus. It was a Sabbath when Jesus made this mud and healed him. According to the Law of Moses, the people were to do no work on the Sabbath. At first, there is a division because some were asking, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?"

However, it seems the Sabbath Day absolutists win out. They question the man as to how he received his sight. Then they questioned his parents. And the parents are afraid to answer because anyone who confesses Jesus to be the Christ will be put out of the synagogue. So the parents, out of fear, throw their son under the bus and say, "He is of age; ask him."

So they ask him a second time, and WOW does he give an answer. The Pharisees say, "We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see. . . Do you also want to be one of His disciples?' Definite hint of sarcasm of which I am a big fan.

And they say, "We are the disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from." Now, remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus two weeks ago in John chapter 3, "The Spirit blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know

where it comes from or where it goes.” “My Word I speak to you is Spirit and truth.”

And that is what this blind man who can now see and has become a believer, at least a believer that Jesus is at least a prophet from God says to the Pharisees, “This is amazing! You don’t know where this man comes from and you know that he opened my eyes and we know, as believers, that God does not listen to unbelievers, to sinners.

Who really is the blind one? The one who chooses to remain in the darkness apart from the Light of the World. Jesus’ statement, “I am the Light of the World” is the second of His “I AM” statements in John’s Gospel. The first we heard in John 6, “I am the Bread of Life” – which is also deliberately said to prepare His disciples for the Sacramental life of the church when He is ascended into heaven, as He says to them, “For My flesh is real food and My blood is real drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. [6:55-56].

The miracles of Jesus and every word which proceeds from His mouth was done with the intent of training His disciples, His apostles – the ones who would be sent into the world – so that they, through God’s Word and sacraments would bring light into darkness and would open the eyes of the ones who did not know that they were blind. Rejoice that God has opened your eyes that you see the Light of the World. Amen.