

1 Samuel 16:1-13  
Psalm 23  
Ephesians 5:8-14  
John 9:1-41

## **Sermon March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

### *Jesus Is the Light of the World*

In our gospel, Jesus comes into a community, and heals a blind man who people have come to know as the blind beggar. Now, one would think that this is a time to celebrate and give thanks, because this person no longer has to beg for their food. They can now enter the work force, and become a contributing member of the community.

Well, hold on a second here, Jesus. Do you know what you just did? This person's healing has thrown our community all out of sorts. We were used to seeing this person as the blind beggar.

Instead of welcoming this change in their community, they question it. They feel anxious and scared about the impact this healing will have on their community

Likewise, there are many examples where we feel all out of sorts when we experience getting healthy or healing from something. Like getting out of an abusive environment. At first, it feels weird being in this new environment where we are not experiencing abuse. To survive while in the abusive environment, we often find a way to live with the abuse. We get used to it. We don't know how to live away from it. This is one of the reasons we see many people return to the abusive environment. People in this situation often have to go through a detox period before they start feeling good about being in a healthier environment.

So, even a positive change can leave us feeling anxious and scared in this new environment. The unknown is rarely comfortable.

Similarly, when someone becomes sober, they need a lot of support as everything in their life changes. From their relationships to how they feel to the new expectations they face. This is why support groups are so important in recovery.

This is also true for their family and friends who now need to change how they interact with the person who has become sober.

Another example I can think of is when we begin an exercise program. For the first little while it takes it's toll on us. Our muscles ache. We feel tired. We breathe heavy.

Or when we heal from an injury we need to get used to new expectations. I think of the movie Ground Hog Day, where Phil who is played by Bill Murray is dancing with Rita who is played by Andie MacDowell. A woman and her husband who are dancing

beside them thank Phil for healing the husband's back. Because now he can help around the house again. And Phil says, I'm sorry to hear that, Felix.

There are many examples where we feel all out of sorts when we experience getting healthy or healing from something.

Well, our gospel states that Jesus is the light of the world. Meaning, Jesus opens our eyes to see things differently than we did before. Jesus opens our eyes to see all that Jesus makes new. Inviting us to welcome this new way of looking at things. Inviting us to accept the things Jesus makes new in our lives. Inviting us to reveal to people where we are seeing this light shining in our lives, in our community, and in our world.

Whether it is healing from a past trauma or finding the strength and commitment to take better care of ourselves or entering into sobriety or welcoming a person in a new way or seeing the world or something we believe in, in a new way.

And with this new way, this new life, comes change. With this new way, this new life, comes a period of struggle, anxiety, fear. With this new way, this new life, comes dealing with unknowns. With this new way, this new life comes a period where we will need to detox from what was.

But what we see with getting healthy or healing from something, once we get through the initial period of struggle, anxiety, fear, detox, we come to a place where we feel better than we did before. We feel liberated from the limitations we lived with when feeling unhealthy. We feel energized by this new life to get out in the world and help others feel this same liberation from their suffering.

In our gospel, many people in the community initially struggle to accept this person's healing from their blindness. But this person is energized by their healing, and is motivated by this new life to share what has happened to them to the people in their community. Even as this person faces pushback.

This person's healing and energy become contagious as many more people welcome Jesus' new way of seeing the world. Opening their eyes to see the things Jesus is making new. Including this Blind Beggar.

Jesus is the light of the world). Opening our eyes to see ourselves, our community, our world in a new way. Opening our hearts to accept those things in our lives, in our community that Jesus makes new. Opening our mouths to celebrate and give thanks for this new life.

Let us pray, loving God, when we find ourselves standing in darkness, shine your light. Showing us a new way. Revealing to us the things you make new. **Amen.**