

THE FIRST 15

Monday, April 22, 2024

Today is Monday, April 22 and we are studying the Gospel of John.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy and loving God, be present with me as a new day dawns. Help me remember to seek you first in life before all things. As I enter this time of prayer and reflection, I calm my mind, quiet my thoughts and slow my breath. I gently inhale your love, joy and peace as firmly as I exhale any negative thoughts, cares or concerns. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

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 works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam." So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." John 9:1-11

REFLECTION

The Feast of Tabernacles with its festival of light was in the height of celebration. When Jesus left the Temple he encountered a blind man. This man had been born blind. He never experienced sight or light until he stood before the Light of the World. The ancient prophecies indicated that when the Messiah came the blind would see and the deaf would hear (Isaiah 29:18, 35:5). There would be miracles of healing. Jesus formed mud from saliva and the dust of the earth and placed it on the man's eyes. He instructed him to wash in the Pool of Siloam. Within the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles the waters of Siloam were meaningful. The priests drew water from the Pool of Siloam and led a procession to the Temple. Beautiful pitchers of water were ceremoniously poured out as a libation upon the altar for the people's wholeness and healing. Jesus said he is the Living Water. He is the one who brings wholeness and healing. Through him come life and light.

I consider the perspective of this poor man who never saw the sunshine, the blue sky or the faces of the people he loved. Living in a world of darkness and black night without the modern advances to aid those born without sight. For decades he sat in the same place and begged for coins or food. One day in his darkness he heard the voice of hope and felt the touch of mercy. A cool paste was placed over his eyes and a voice told him to "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam."

The place of healing. He knew the way. He washed in the water. It was a miracle. He was able to see. Overwhelmed by the beauty of the world, the colors of nature, the images of people.

How does this miracle speak to my circumstances today? Where is my blindness? What am I not able to see? Maybe I am blind to the love of God. Maybe I am blind to the love of others. Maybe I am unable to see the suffering of those around me. Maybe I am unaware of the needs of my family, church or friends. Maybe my vision of the future is impaired and I am blindly proceeding down the wrong path. Maybe the truth of scripture is invisible to me. Maybe I am ignorant of my own tendency toward sin. Maybe I am unaware how I am harming myself. I have some blind spots and Jesus wants to open my eyes. Jesus is the one who brings healing and wholeness. Jesus is the one who shines light in my darkness. Jesus has the power to change things - the power to change me.

Ask: Where are my spiritual blind spots? What might God want me to see that I have been oblivious to?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed Lord Jesus, open my eyes that I may see. Shine your light on the darkness of my heart and correct the vision of my mind. I don't know what I am not able to see, but you do. Remove the blinders from my soul and let me see more clearly. I do not want to miss out on your presence and good work in the world. I want to go into the future walking the path you have laid for me, faithfully following in your footsteps with my eyes wide open. Amen.