

THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Today is Tuesday, April 23 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

“Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.” Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” John 9:32-39

REFLECTION

Jesus healed a man who was born blind. When the man's neighbors saw him no longer blind, they assumed they had him confused with someone else. Someone who looked like him. The man insisted he was the same person who sat begging for decades but now he could see. A man called Jesus made some mud and put it on his eyes. After he washed off the mud in the Pool of Siloam he could see. The neighbors brought the man to the religious authorities for interrogation. The Pharisees didn't believe the man had been blind from birth, so they brought in his parents and questioned them. They verified that their son was indeed blind from birth and they could not explain his newly found sight. They questioned the man again and despite his testimony and the obvious miracle, they refused to believe him. In anger, they threw him out.

Despite their education, religious status and lives of dedication, the Pharisees were blind to the truth of Christ. They refused to believe he was God's Messiah and denied the obvious miracles he performed. The poor humble beggar was overjoyed to receive his physical sight and then had his eyes opened further. The eyes of his heart recognized Jesus as God's Son. He proclaimed his belief in Jesus and he worshiped him. The spiritual eyes of one soul were opened and the spiritual eyes of others remained decidedly shut.

I consider the health of my own spiritual eyes. How well am I able to see Jesus? The truth of Jesus is revealed in scripture - in the Old and New Testaments. The presence of Jesus is found in the comings and goings of my ordinary day. The power of Jesus is at work in the world around me. The light of Jesus reveals sin, pain and suffering. The hope of Jesus rises in times of suffering. The healing of Jesus actively moves in my body, mind, and spirit, repairing the

past, restoring relationships, mending brokenness. The life of Jesus awakens my soul. The love of Jesus watches over me. Guards me. The mercy of Jesus forgives my transgressions and repairs my trespasses. Jesus goes behind me and before me. He is with me and within me. Beside me and around me. He is everywhere.

Ask: How well am I able to see Jesus? Like the blind man, do I see him, hear him, believe in him and worship him?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, you are the Light of the World. Open my eyes that I may see. Open my ears that I may hear. Let me see your face and recognize your voice. Grow my awareness of your activity in the world and your work in my life. Show me how I can cooperate with your loving goodness and participate in what you are doing all around me. Improve my spiritual vision and give me new insights into your grace and truth. Amen.