

From our Churches

Author: Mark Diller Harder

Church: St. Jacobs Mennonite Church

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Man Born Blind **Monologues by Father and Pharisee** John 9

Father:

I can still hear the stinging remarks, repeated over the years, sometimes out loud, but more often whispered in the corners, just out of earshot – ‘it’s **his** fault he was born blind. He must have committed some horrible sin. Or it’s because of his father. What did **he** do?’ They would quote Leviticus: ‘they will waste away because of the sins of their fathers.’ It made me feel like dirt, like mud. We suffered in silence. Some days it felt like we were blind – we could not see past the moment. We had no idea what the future would hold, where this would all go. Last I heard he was begging on the streets just to feed himself.

Pharisee:

It’s all really quite clear. Crystal clear. A case of mistaken identity. No one really pays attention to what a blind beggar looks like, do they? Now there is this ‘story’, this rumour going around about a blind beggar receiving sight from Jesus. We have to stamp it out before rumour turns into legend, legend into history and history into fact. And then we will have even more problems with that renegade. I didn’t believe it for a moment. This was impossible. Healing blindness. On a Sabbath no less. Unless I would see it with my own eyes. We hauled up the man in front of us, and all he said was “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see. He is a prophet.” I think he was trying to drag us all into the mud!

Father:

They didn’t believe my son. Didn’t hardly hear his words. I hardly believe it myself, but I know who my son is and that now he can see. They hauled us in and interrogated us. I was scared to say too much. What if they started accusing us of confessing Jesus as Messiah and we were kicked out of the synagogue? How do I know how this happened or who opened his eyes. Ask him yourself! He is of age.... They finally let us alone.

Pharisee:

They say that blasphemy is to insult or show contempt or lack of reverence for God or claim to be God-like, to see what God sees. This beggar was starting to cross that line! We told him to give God the glory, not Jesus, this sinner! But he kept insisting, kept playing dumb. Again he told us his muddy story. ‘I was blind, but now I see.’ And then he started pushing it. “Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples? Here is an

astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man was not from God, he could do nothing!" We couldn't stand it anymore. This sinner trying to teach us, the learned Pharisees. We drove him out.

Father:

I think I am finally getting it. I'm beginning to see. This Jesus person, prophet, God-man, Messiah? is bringing in a whole new way to see the world. He's turning things upside down. We don't have to judge people. Or push people to the edges of community. Our son is back in our family. The shame is gone. Do you know that our son met Jesus one more time? Jesus asked him if he believed in the Son of Man. Jesus said, 'you have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' My son believed! My son worshipped. It's all so crystal clear now.

Pharisee:

I'm not sure if I know anything anymore. It's all gotten muddy. All the evidence points to the beggar being who he claims he is, and despite our objections, he truly can see. That I can see with my own eyes. But I can't explain it! We followed Jesus, trying to see if he would say anything. He spoke only in riddles. "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Surely I am not blind, am I? And then Jesus said "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains." I wonder more and more who it is that really has blinders on?