

Lessons for the Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 19, 2023

Psalm 142 ~ *David prays desperately to God for protection from his enemies, confident of his mercy.*

Isaiah 42:14-21 ~ *God promised to turn darkness to light and give the blind sight to follow Him.*

Ephesians 5:8-14 ~ *Rebirth in faith is like waking from death into the glorious light of God's new day.*

John 9:1-41 ~ *When Jesus gave sight to a blind man, he gave clear testimony that Jesus was a prophet.*
or John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Our Eyes are Always on the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus is the Light of the World and shines in our dark lives to guide us into his truth. Sometimes even the people of light close their eyes to the dawn of God's grace, as they did in Isaiah's day. Then they are spiritually blind, just as the Pharisees were when they confronted the man to whom Jesus had given sight. That man saw much more than his physical world when he met Jesus. Our eyes also are opened to see him and our tongues moved to confess: "I do believe, Lord!"

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Almighty God, your light shines in my life to light up my dark world. You know my needs and my desires. Reach out your strong hand to defend me from my enemies and guide me in the path of your truth. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: The blind man healed by Jesus on the Sabbath used his new found sight to give a clear witness to "the prophet" who had healed him. Our lives are gifts to God when we clearly express our faith in Jesus, the Son of God and Savior of the world.

OFFERING PRAYER: Through our stewardship of Your gifts, dear Father,
May we shine like bright lights for others,
That many people will hear the good news
That Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: When we fail to discern what is pleasing to the Lord, we are living in the darkness of this world, out of touch with God and lost in our selfish wills. God heals us from blindness just as Jesus did the man who he told to wash in the pool of Siloam. To recognize the redeeming power of God working in the darkness of this world means that we are enlisted in the work of the Kingdom of God and seek to do the Father's will.

Questions to Consider: How long can you look at an optical illusion before you see it?

- Why is God's servant blind and his messenger deaf?
- How does Ephesians 5:8-14 explain the use of security lights?
- Why were the Pharisees blinded by the Sabbath?
- What is it that the man Jesus healed saw that we also see?

Bonus on next page: seeing life in perspective

Perspectives on Life

Life is seen best
looking backwards
from death to birth.

The proof of a prophet
the truth of a saying
is known in its ending.

The power of sin
is seen at its worst
when it's too late.

Try to save your life
you'll lose it.
Lose it in service to find it.

The life of faith is a walk in the dark
with light from Christ's tomb to guide us
where we see life clearly.

See your past in Jesus' death,
present in his life,
future in his resurrection.