



Hanover United Methodist Church

**Sunday March 22, 2020
Message Review for Today**

From John chapter 9

Jesus was walking around one day, runs into a man who's been blind since birth. His disciples start to ask questions about why it happened. Not about how the son of God could do something about it, but, who's fault is it? Who's sinned? Who's responsible? Look at the heart of the matter. What should we be centering on? Blame? Or a compassionate approach? Jesus tells them not of blame and sin, but of the opportunity to bring glory to God. And Jesus doesn't just talk about it. He acts. He heals. In offensive and unconventional action. He spits on the ground, and puts the dirty spit mixture on the blind guy's eyes and tells him go wash it off. Talk about being off the wall! The most religious people of the day were not impressed. They were actually ticked off at this unauthorized (being sarcastic here!) miracle working. On the Sabbath no less!

Does this scene make us ask-what if Jesus acted among us now in never before seen ways to compassionately bring healing and relief, would we have a clue that it had anything to do with Jesus? And that it was a blessing, not a curse?

The healed formerly blind man was then actually put on trial, so to speak, to defend Jesus and the healing! What a scene! Where's the celebrating by the people of God at the Son of God performing healing among them?! At bringing relief?!

Reminds me of a story from a colleague from when he served a church in downtown South Bend Indiana. The church had been downtown for many years, built when the downtown was a bustling center of commerce and a prestigious place to be located. The downtown had become much less prosperous and 'run down.' As this church began ministries for those in need in the area, and 'those people' began to be a regular presence, an upstanding upper-class member came to this pastor and angrily proclaimed, 'how dare you turn this church into a mission!' Right. Jesus messes up our (!) church.

In the end, Jesus tells the supposedly ultra-religious that they are actually the blind ones.

'I once was blind, but now I see' is what the blind man proclaimed. to the Pharisees.

As we now also live in troubled times, just as Christ, may we approach, offer compassion, offer healing in the name of Jesus. BTW, (that means By The Way, BTW) 'In the name of Jesus' is meant to mean, being in character with the person of, the ways of, Jesus. It's not just a phrase for praying. It's a way of living. Lord, have your way in and through us. As you are blessing and healing us, may we be a blessing, be healing, in this world.

Peace of Christ,

Pastor Harley