



The Gospel of John

Man Born Blind

This is one of those stories in John's Gospel that seems to give us a picture, not only of Jesus' ministry but of the development of the church in John's time and community. The text reflects tension between the new community of messianic Jews (the Christians) and the traditional Mosaic Jews. The dispute between the man born blind and his interlocutors may well reflect a dispute between those who believe in Christ as God's Messiah and those who think that he is an imposter and a fraud.

Notice how the story unfolds as a kind of drama. Characters exit and enter the scene. There is conflict, crisis and resolution. After the leaders of the synagogue cast the blind man out, Jesus seeks him out. For John's Gospel true sight, true faith seems always to involve both the courage of the believer and the goodness of Christ who seeks the believer.

Notice how the blind man's understanding of Jesus deepens as the story progresses. Is this a clue to the way the Gospel understands the growth of faith?

And notice how the judgment that Jesus pronounces at the end is judgment for here and now, not just for the future.

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