

Meditation: The video is a mediation on Structure, Flow, and Life. Notice they are One.

Introduction: My hope is that you follow Jesus, not me. I continue to hear Jesus inviting me to follow him. I hear His call most clearly in scripture. Reading the Gospel Stories is like living daily life. How many voices, opinions, and groups compete for our ears, eyes, and life. The beauty of Scripture is that it reveals God with us, in us, and often revealed through the last person we expect. I have come to expect to see and hear God through Jesus Christ calling you to follow him, not me. The same Spirit that was in Christ Jesus is our guide. This lesson is merely my witness of hearing and seeing Jesus through the words of Matthew 9: 27-34. Like two blind people may we find one another, journey together, while crying, "Son of David, have mercy."

Scripture

As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" **28** When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. **29** Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you"; **30** and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this." **31** But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region. **32** While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. **33** And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." **34** But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

Let the Story be the Story: but state the facts in your words.

Example: Two blind people find one another. They both want eyes that see. They hear about a physician who heals such afflictions. Together they follow Jesus, crying, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." Jesus touched their eyes and spoke to them about faith. He also told them that they should not tell anyone about their encounter.

Several questions rise out of the story. How did two blind people find one another? How did they agree on seeing the same doctor? Why did they call Jesus the Son of David? Who goes to the doctor to get a prescription for mercy? What does mercy heal? What purpose is hidden in not telling people how their faith healed them?

Let the Structure of your heart and mind answer these questions. It is here that Reason and Experience encounter Scripture.

Let your heart and mind answer these questions. What have Sunday school teachers, preachers, nation, kindred, and parents taught you about blindness and evil? In other words, what do you know? How did you come to know this? Who taught you? What do you believe?

Let scripture Structure provide the answers to these questions. It is here that we learn to deny self. We practice Christian Spiritual Disciplines to experience our need of mercy.

In other words, begin by letting chapter 9:27-34 make statements, beg questions, and give answers to the questions. Take each story independent of the other. Let the text identify the people encountering one another. For example: In today's passage I identify: Jesus, Two Blind Men, Son of David, a demon possessed man, the Crowd, the Pharisees.

Denying self allows us to Enter the **Flow** of the conversation to listen, hear, and experience Life through the

hearts and minds of God and neighbor. This practice is called fasting. Fast your thoughts, feelings, and judgments. Deny your Reason and Experience as stated above. Prayer is another Spiritual Discipline. Yes we talk to God but denying self teaches us to listen and hear God and neighbor without being blinded by our reason and experience of judgement.

To do this I imagine I am standing high above the scene. I watch, wait, and listen, for God to reveal God's self through the story or Movie unfolding beneath me. It is like standing in the sanctuary above. Here I am safe. It is like my heart and mind being swept up in the flow of God's Life.

Let the structure of scripture reveal the Tradition of God's Salvation. All of Scripture reveals Salvation History!

What is Jesus' central message in Matthew 9?

Matthew: 9:13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'^[a] For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

What does Scripture say about "The Son of David?"

II Samuel 7: 11-16 "The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: **12** When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. **13** He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **14** I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. **15** But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **16** Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me^[b]; your throne will be established forever."

The Call to Repentance: The word repent means to seek a new heart and a new mind. To have the same mind that is in Christ Jesus.

In Chapter 9 we meet the Teachers of the Law of Moses. They judge Jesus according to the Law. "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain." Exodus 20:7. Jesus said he forgives sin and heals sinners. The Teachers of the Law judge Jesus to be a blasphemer who takes God's name in vain. We also meet the Pharisees. They judge Jesus according to the moral and ethical code they use to keep the Law of Moses. Eating with sinners and tax collectors is unethical. The Disciples of John the Baptist see that Jesus does not teach his disciples to fast. Ergo Jesus is "wrong!"

My take away from Matthew 9:

1. God desires mercy, not sacrifice.
2. Jesus is the Son of David. The Promised eternal King.
3. The Law of Moses, the ethical and moral code of the Pharisees, and John the Baptist Disciples are clearly within the Structure of Scripture. They blind us with there Judgement and sacrifice people in the name of God. Mercy gives us eyes to see Jesus who promises to be with us always. Matthew 28:20
4. The Teachers of the Law, the Pharisees, and John's disciples are blind.
5. The Blind are the "poor in Spirit" to whom the Kingdom of Heaven belongs. (Beatitudes.)

6. Mercy fulfills the Law and Prophets! Matthew 5:17

7. The reason Jesus tells those whose faith made them well not to tell anyone is simple. Jesus calls sinners to follow Him, not the healed. God knows I am a recovering Teacher of the Law and Pharisee!

Jesus, Son of David, Lord of Creation, have mercy on me!

Thank you for joining with me. I have shared what I have seen and heard Flow from Scripture. My hope is that you let the Holy Spirit lead you. Come to Sunday school this Sunday to share your questions, insights, and call to follow Jesus.

One in Christ,

Robert