

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

22 May 2016

## Topics

### A.M. Bible Class:

Remaining faithful (Hebrews 6:4-12)

### A.M. Lesson:

From God's perspective (Isaiah 55:6-11)

### P.M. Lesson:

My sheep hear my voice (John 10:22f)

### Wednesday:

The God of the covenant (in the annex)

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Sunday Bible Class          | 10:00 A.M. |
| Sunday Morning Worship      | 11:00 A.M. |
| Sunday Evening Worship      | 6:30 P.M.  |
| Wednesday Evening Class     | 6:30 P.M.  |
| Thursday Ladies Bible Class | 10:00 A.M. |

***Great are the works of the Lord,  
studied by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:2  
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.***

## Why was the blind man blind?

Mike Saia

One passage of Scripture gives many readers the impression God sometimes causes people to suffer so He can display His glory. The story, found in John chapter 9, seems to imply God made a man blind so He could manifest His works in the man by healing him.

This text bothered me for many years until I read the passage straight through in the Greek. I was reading this passage because of its reference to the word "sin," but as I did, I saw something I had never seen before.

The early Greek manuscripts were written in all capital letters, most had no punctuation except paragraph breaks, and there were no spaces between the words.

Because of the way the text was written, spaces between words, accents, breathing marks, and punctuation must be supplied by the translators. Most often these additions are helpful, but there are instances where the translation is influenced by the theological presuppositions of the translators.

As Roger Forster commented about this

passage, it is most often translated the way it is because of "convention and prejudice"—"convention" because it has always been translated that way, and "prejudice" because the translators really believe God made the person blind so He could heal him. Roger also noted these translations represent God as completely different in character from the way He is described in the rest of the Scriptures. If these translations are accurate, this would be the only place in the Bible God is described as doing something evil to an innocent person so good could result.

The wording of most English versions gives the idea God made the man blind so He could display His glory in the man. But that would be doing evil so good may result. This is how the text is translated in the New American Standard Bible:

Jesus answered, "*It was* neither *that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* in order that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no man can work."

In the Greek, however, the words “it was,” “that,” and “it was” are simply not there. That is why they are in italics in the NASB. If you read the text as the Greek reads, without the additional English words, you see the question is answered first, and then Jesus goes on with His original business of healing the man.

Jesus answered, “Neither this man sinned, nor his parents. But in order that the works of God might be displayed in him, we must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.”

In other words, “Enough of these questions about whose fault this is. We need to be getting on with the work of the Father.” Thus, with different punctuation, and without the extra words from the translators, the meaning of the passage is very different. The disciples were discussing why the man was born blind. Was it because he sinned (maybe in a former life?), or that his parents sinned? Jesus’ answer was simple and straightforward—it was neither. So, in essence, Jesus did not really answer the question. Then, turning to the most important issue, He carried on with the work of His Father to heal the man.

Mike Saia. *Why do the Innocent Suffer?*

**It is Christ Himself, not the Bible, who is the true word of God. The Bible, read in the right spirit and with the guidance of good teachers, will bring us to Him. We must not use the Bible as a sort of encyclopedia out of which texts can be taken for use as weapons.**

C. S. Lewis, John 1:14; 5:39-40

## **News:**

*Melinda, Joy Gibson’s daughter, is recovering from surgery.*

*Billie Martin has requested prayers for professional issues she is experiencing in the workplace.*

*John and Sharon Cunningham are traveling in Oklahoma.*

*Louella Briggs is traveling in Washington state. She plans to return in the first week of June.*

## **Prayer list:**

*Christian Children’s Home in Portales, New Mexico*

*Dan Keele—mission work*

*Robin Richards—back pain*

*Sam Appleton—declining health*

*John Cunningham—cancer*

*Norma Robinson—health*

*Linda Boling—health*

*H.L. Boling—general health and complications from leukemia*

*Tatyana Knowlton—macular degeneration*

*Nic and Ani Self—health and personal needs*

Neil Short, editor. neshort@yahoo.com. <http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>



**If material things are what you are talking about when you say, “I’m blessed;” you have no idea what a blessing is.**

Author unknown