Medit March 15 4th S in Lent 2026
1 Sam16:1-13; Ps 23; Ephes 5:8-14; Jn 9:1-41.

Being Able to See

". . One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." (John 9:23b, NRSV). ". . .you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another." (Ephesians 5: 13, NRSV).

That man born blind stands tall in the Bible. But most of his life he was known in the community as the one who "sat and beg". He did not have much social contact. It was bad enough that he was a beggar, let alone being blind. There is a natural tendency to avoid beggars. Except when we find ourselves having compassion, reminded that being so was the right thing to be. That is what Jesus did. Jesus did something quite unmentionable by current standards of hygiene and, with the resulting mess, he applied it on the man's eyes. Then he told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. ". .he went and washed, and came back able to see." He stands tall not because of what he himself did, but because of the Lord Jesus. Beyond that, he stands tall because he was audacious and unwavering in telling it was Jesus who healed him. For a formerly blind man, that is courageous, especially in the face of the authorities determined to block the truth. In the process, he gained more than physical sight. He saw the truth of Jesus. In him he found God. That makes him stand tall. He remained tall during his time. And continues so today for us.

Sight, or the ability to see around us, is a precious gift. The scourge of blindness continues to be a fact of life in our world today as in the past. The eye, one of the smallest parts of the body, just an inch long and weighing just a few ounces, is the focus of one of the most important specializations in medicine. Healing for the eye and the restoration of sight is no less a miracle and a gift today, as God uses the skill and dedication of trained specialists in the intricacies, complexities and importance of the eye for the gift of sight.

That brings us to the other kind of seeing we might call insight. We need that in life as we need the ability to see physically. While it is also a gift, it is something that we can cultivate on a self-help basis. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the one constant presence in our lives. God has already gifted us with it, but is often overlooked. The Apostle Paul said so in his letter to the church in Ephesus. He challenged them to use their inner ability to see that the blessings they possess in being part of the beloved community is not just for their own private, personal benefit. That required maturity on their part. And we are all called to that kind of maturity in seeing not just ourselves as focus of the love of God. For the God who loves us personally also loves others aside from us, including those who may be different from us. And God desires that the gift God has given us be also experienced and given to those others aside from us. Until the whole world shall have known the joys and glorious victories through knowing that God loves the whole world, by knowing Jesus Christ as the one who showed and shows how much God cares.

That brings us back to the man born blind. He received the gift of sight. He rejoiced that he came back from the pool of Siloam being able to see. But there was greater kind of sight he experienced. When he found who Jesus was, he believed in him. He received that gift as the greatest gift of all. And the temple authorities, unable to bring themselves to see Jesus as the formerly blind was, sadly remained blind despite their protestations that they see.

Our time is rife with so much blindness. Lies dressed up as truth, as truth twisted and maligned or debunked become the standard fare. We need, and are called to cultivate the gift of seeing through inner sight and the spirit. I hope and pray that we attend to this with dedication and faithfulness as part of our journey of faith and life, especially for such a time as this. AMEN.
Joy and peace,

Rev. Dr. Ben Vinluan