



The Gospel According to John Video 7

Thoughts from Susan Roberts on the Reading for Week of February 23: John 8:31 – 9:41

view the video at www.vimeo.com/fbcknox/gatjweek7

Video Transcript:



When I read chapter nine which was about healing the blind man, I was struck at how the pharisees and the Jews were so upset over this whole business of Jesus healing this blind man – first of all, that He healed him, and of course that He healed him on the Sabbath. And they spent all this time asking the *blind man* questions, asking the blind man's *friends* questions, asking *Jesus* questions, asking the blind man's *parents* questions, going back to the blind man *again* ...

and I'm thinking, "Man, would you just give this a *rest*?" But, I also started thinking, well if you are that upset about something, you must feel very threatened.

Back when God approached Abraham, and said, you know, "I want you to follow me, and I'll make your descendents great", He didn't say, "Here's what you have to do," He just said "Follow Me." And Abraham *did*, and he had faith, and he followed God. And that was a whole relationship-based thing, but then over time it evolved into where it became a religion where you had to do this list of steps, and follow these rules. So that's what they were comfortable with. And when Jesus came saying, "I've got a different idea," they were clinging to these rules, because that's all they knew, and that's where their security was. And it reminded me—and their reaction to Jesus—of the dog with the bone that he doesn't want to give up, and Jesus is trying to offer them this fresh piece of meat, and they say, "No, I *really* want this old dried up bone!" And it's not giving them any nutrition, any real value anymore. But it's the old, dried up bone they *know*, and they *love*, and they don't want to give it up, no matter *what* Jesus is offering. So that's what struck me from this passage, is that how often are we like that too. He talks about spiritual blindness in here—what are the things that we are blind to because we are so focused on what keeps us secure and what keeps us on the status quo?



When I think about this story in John and the man's literal, physical blindness, and how that contrasts with the



Pharisees' spiritual blindness, I think we are *all* susceptible to spiritual blindness. There are things that we *don't* see because we *choose not* to, or because we just aren't *looking*. And I think about how our church here is on the cusp of new leadership and perhaps a new direction, and how perhaps we need to be more mindful of new ways of doing things so that we can still continue to be the body of Christ to the people around us.