

One Thing I Know

WHAT WE FOUND

- The disciples looked at a blind man and saw a theological puzzle. Jesus refused both of their options and did not replace them with a tidy third.
- He made clay, and sent the man to a pool whose name St. John stops to translate: Siloam means Sent. The man's first act of obedience was to walk somewhere with mud on his face, on the word of someone he had never seen.
- His confession climbed steadily under pressure: a man called Jesus, a prophet, one who must be from God, and finally Lord.
- What he could actually report stayed thin. He did not know where Jesus was, did not know whether Jesus was a sinner, and did not know who Jesus was until after he had already been thrown out for him.
- His strength was staying inside what he actually knew. "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I know."
- He argued and he won, using only his own experience and premises he offers as shared religious knowledge. Nobody in the Old Testament ever opened the eyes of a man born blind, which is exactly his point in verse 32.
- When the argument failed, they attacked his credentials and threw him out. And Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and went and found him.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | St. Irenaeus on the clay

St. Irenaeus teaches in substance that the same hand which formed man from the dust of the earth at the beginning is the hand that made clay and completed what was missing in this man's eyes, so that the healing shows the Creator finishing his own work rather than mending another's.

His larger argument is aimed at those who said the God of creation and the Father of Jesus Christ were two different Gods. The clay is his evidence: the one who made the eyes is the one who opened them.

St. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.15.2. A faithful summary of his argument, not a quotation.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | St. Augustine on a confession that grows

Preaching through this Gospel, St. Augustine teaches in substance that the man's confession climbs by stages, from a man called Jesus, to a prophet, to one who must be from God, to Lord, and that the light came into his heart more slowly than it came into his eyes.

He also dwells on St. John's gloss that Siloam means Sent, and takes it as pointing to Christ himself, the one sent by the Father, in whom the man is washed.

St. Augustine, summarized from his Tractates on the Gospel of John. A faithful summary of his teaching, not a quotation.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | Pope St. Paul VI on witness, and on its limits

Pope St. Paul VI taught that the Gospel must first be proclaimed by witness, by a life that raises unavoidable questions in the people who see it: why are they like this, what or who is it that inspires them.

And then he said the part that is usually left out. Even the finest witness remains insufficient by itself, because the good news

must eventually be proclaimed in words, and the name and the teaching and the life and the promises and the Kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth have to be announced. The man born blind is exactly this: something happened to him, and then he had to open his mouth about it.

Pope St. Paul VI, Evangelii Nuntiandi 21 and 22 (1975).

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

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Rung 6 of the ladder. Write your one sentence. This is the first rung where something of yours goes on paper.

- Keep praying for the three by name, daily.
- Write one sentence: "One thing I know..." No theology, no argument, no verse. What has actually happened to you because of Jesus Christ. If it takes more than two lines, it is not finished yet.
- Practice saying it out loud, alone, until it does not sound rehearsed. This is not silly. Most people have never once said such a sentence aloud.
- Then find the honest limits of it. Write down two questions you would not be able to answer if someone pushed back on your sentence. Do not go and research them yet. Just name them.
- Bring the sentence next week. You will not be made to read it out.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"One thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see."

John 9:25

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read Acts 2:1-41 before we meet. It is long, so give it one unhurried sitting. Pay attention to what Peter actually says, in what order.

CATECHISM REFERENCES

- **CCC 905.** Lay people fulfill their prophetic mission by proclaiming Christ in both the testimony of life and the spoken word.
- **CCC 2471.** Christ came into the world to bear witness to the truth, and the Christian is not to be ashamed of testifying to the Lord.
- **CCC 2472.** The duty to bear witness to the Gospel in words and deeds, which is a transmission of the faith.
- **CCC 1502.** Illness is mysteriously linked to sin and evil, and suffering can also have a redemptive meaning.
- **CCC 309.** There is no quick answer to the question of evil.
- **CCC 597.** Responsibility for the death of Jesus cannot be laid on the Jews of Jerusalem as a whole, nor on Jews of other times and places.