

which any member could so greatly suffer.”—(Trench.)

3. **Neither**—Jesus does not mean that the man and his parents were sinless, but that the blindness was not sent as the punishment of any particular sin. (Compare Luke 13: 1-5, and the story of Job.) **But that**—The design of God in this case is here revealed by authority. God subjected him to this misfortune in order that he might be a means of glorifying Him. What is man's chief end? **The works of God**—That he might be a subject of Christ's healing power; that he might be an example of God's loving care of a helpless one from day to day; that he and his parents might experience the chastening of the Lord, which was for their spiritual profit; and that the pity and sympathy of others might find in him an occasion for exercise. (John 11: 4; Rom. 11: 33.) For all that he meekly suffered here the man would receive a rich reward hereafter. We should be glad to know that sin's cruel consequences are not always penalties, but are intended as means of blessing to us and others.

II. A SUFFERER RELIEVED. 4. **We must work** (R. V.)—Whether God calls us to active effort or patient suffering, like this blind man, we should live only to do God's will. Jesus often urges to ceaseless activity (John 4: 34; 5: 19, 36; 11: 9; 12: 35; 17: 4). **The night**—The immediate reference may be to our Saviour's death, but we take his words rather with the general meaning: “This life is the season for glorifying God in the face of sin and its consequences. Time and opportunities lost can never be restored.”

“Through this toilsome world, alas!
Once and only once I pass.
If a kindness I may shew,
If a good deed I may do
To any suffering fellow-man,
Let me do it while I can,
Nor delay it, for 'tis plain
I shall not pass this way again.”

5. **The light of the world**—The gospel of Christ dispels the moral and spiritual darkness of man. His miracles were types of his real work. He heals the leprosy of sin, restores our spiritual powers, casts evil out of our hearts, illuminates our consciences and minds, and raises up those dead in sin. Read and compare together Isa. 29: 18; 35: 5; 42: 7; Luke 4: 18-21; John 1: 5, 9; 3: 19; 8: 12; 12: 35, 46.

6. **Anointed his eyes** (R. V.)—Sometimes our Saviour used means in performing his miracles, and sometimes he spoke the word only. He knew best when they were called for and when not. But in every case the virtue lay, not in any natural remedy, but in his own supernatural and divine healing power. In employing them our Saviour graciously aided the weak faith of the sufferers and their friends. Here the blind man would feel the gentle touch of Jesus, applying a simple and

well-known remedy, and this would awaken trust and expectation in him. It would, moreover, connect more closely in the man's mind the cure and the physician.

7. **Go wash**—The water could not open his eyes, but his faith and obedience would be exercised. Compare the story of Naaman, 2 Kings 5: 10. **The pool of Siloam**—A fountain and reservoir at the south-east end of Zion, on the west side of Ophel, the southern spur of the temple hill. **Sent**—The name *Siloam* is derived from the Hebrew verb “to send.” Perhaps, because, springing from the temple hill, it was regarded as the special gift of God. John sees in the name a typical reference to Christ himself. (Isa. 8: 6; John 5: 36-38; 17: 8.) **Came seeing**—His obedience and faith were rewarded. He went there groping his way stick in hand, he returned as if transported into a new world. Who can imagine the sensations that now thrilled him with delight.

III. SCEPTICAL FRIENDS. 8. **That he was a beggar** (R. V.)—instead of “that he was blind.” The two terms are synonymous, for there was nothing that a blind man then could do but beg. They could hardly believe that it was the same man. No man had ever heard of such an one being cured (verse 32), and his opened eyes and lighted up countenance would make him look very unlike the beggar with blind, expressionless face.

11. **The man that is called Jesus** (R. V.)—The well-known wonder-worker, Jesus. He does not yet know him as the Christ, the Saviour from sin. This miracle was wrought on the Sabbath (verse 14). Read the conclusion of this very interesting story, and note the manly bearing of the man, and his prompt and hearty acceptance of his Healer as the Son of God.

“The experience of this man is a type of the case of many a simple-minded believer in our times. Just imagine Jerry McAuley, or Bendigo the prize-fighter, called up before a council of men like Huxley, Darwin, Spencer and Tyndall, and questioned about theological speculations. They could not answer them one in a thousand. Tyndall says, ‘McAuley, how can you reconcile prayer with natural law?’ Poor McAuley would have to say, ‘I cannot do it.’ ‘Well,’ says Darwin, ‘how can you explain Genesis in the light of modern science?’ Again Jerry gives no answer. ‘Come, now,’ says Spencer, ‘tell us what you know about Jesus.’ Now Jerry's lips open. ‘Once,’ he says, ‘I was a river thief, and a drunkard, and a low-lived man. But now I am a sober, honest man, changed in character from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. Jesus wrought this change in me in answer to prayer.’ ‘Well, Bendigo,’ says Huxley, ‘what have you to say about this matter?’ ‘I have much the same testimony as McAuley. I was a prize-fighter, and had fought twenty-four regular battles. I was in prison at one time, and