

Faith, Fear, and Superstition

James 3:16

¹⁶For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

There is deep, dark root of fear in religious culture, regarding hardship as punishment for sin: we call this **superstition**.

John 9:1-2

⁹ As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"

China article

1 John 4:18

¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love

John 9:3 -7, 18-38

³ Jesus answered, "*It was* neither *that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." ⁶ When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came *back* seeing.

Siloam, meaning, "Sent", is the Gk. Word "Apostello", which means to be sent on a mission of peace.

This man needed more than his sight restored; he needed to be freed from the cultural stigma that blindness carried.

His neighbors don't believe it, they take him to the Pharisees, and they question Jesus' credibility, then the man's

¹⁸ The Jews then did not believe *it* of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight, ¹⁹ and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?"

They could believe what they had not seen, so long as it was negative, but could not accept the miracle right in front of them!

²⁰ His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹ but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. ²³ For this reason his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

Fear and shame had stolen the joy in the miracle from his parents, as well as the parental instinct to defend their child.

Unknown to them at this time, something had happened in the heart of their son- faith had come in, displacing all fear!

²⁴ So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ So they said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear *it* again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?" ²⁸ They reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken

to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from.”³⁰ The man answered and said to them, “Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes.”³¹ We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.³² Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.³³ If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.”³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” So they put him out.

The Pharisees, losing the control they loved, tried to put him back under shame, and tried to exclude him from worship.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”³⁶ He answered, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.”³⁸ And he said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped Him.

This is the power of Christ! Fear and shame are gone, faith has filled the heart, and he worships the God he now knows.

Psalm 34

34 I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.² My soul will make its boast in the Lord; The humble will hear it and rejoice.³ O magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together.⁴ I sought the Lord, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears