

Based on John 9:18-34

*Fourth Sunday in Lent*

*The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."*

*So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.*

How can we know if a prophet is a true prophet or just someone making things up? Well, according to the Biblical book of Deuteronomy, there is a way to test the truthfulness of a prophet; "If a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD but the thing does not take place or prove true, it is a word that the LORD has not spoken." In reality, I don't think that's a very helpful test since sometimes the things prophets in the Bible spoke of didn't come to pass for hundreds of years. For example, talk of a Messiah by the Prophets could safely be considered nonsense until Jesus actually showed up; which is probably why many of Israel's leaders refused to believe as we see in this story from John's gospel.

The leaders here, people of authority and privilege, just couldn't believe the testimony they were hearing, even when they saw the miracles for themselves, they just couldn't move beyond their skepticism and their confidence in their own understanding of the world and the ways of God.

It's the same thing St Paul was getting at when he said that way of the cross seems like foolishness to the wise. God is not contained by human logic or understood through rational dissection. God is a power beyond human understanding, and yet God's love is knowable by each of us.

Faith isn't need for things understood with logic, and formulas, and rationality. Faith is the expectation of things hoped for; a deep and secure knowledge that, through God, our deepest needs are being met, and our deepest fears kept at bay.

Faith is a gift of God, a super-power, if you will, that allows us to hold onto the power of hope even in the most trying of circumstances. It is an assurance that what we perceive with our senses doesn't tell us the whole story, that our mortal deaths are not the final word on our existence, and that our lives are infused with purpose and meaning.