

Sermon Notes: March 15, 2026.
Focus: A Blind Courtroom Drama

[Lectionary Readings](#)

I want to explore two themes in today's Gospel. First, as I mentioned last week, John often structures these stories around a pattern: confusion, misunderstanding, insight, and transformation. Second, we can read this passage like a courtroom drama. The blind man begins on the witness stand. Everyone interrogates him. But by the end, the story flips: the man sees clearly while everyone else points fingers and argues in the dark.

Biblical healing stories

They carry real power. I'm not going to spend any time trying to debunk miracles. I witnessed one instantaneous healing when I was a hospital chaplain. So, I'm neither an expert cheerleader nor a scholarly skeptic. I'm content to rejoice in spectacular healings and in everyday miracles. What interests me most are the moments when people are healed by a loving community, even if they are not "cured" of whatever ails them.

Accessibility and the Built World

Human beings have made remarkable strides in accessibility innovations. At some point, even the healthiest among us need the built environment to serve us rather than forcing us to climb narrow stairways or strain to function. Personally, I wish every house were built a little more like a nursing home with flush doorways and wide entrances. I wish everyone who needs them could afford excellent hearing aids. I hope someday people in their nineties can travel independently in safe autonomous cars. At St. Timothy's, I still find it remarkable that mimiuchi.com can translate every word of our service and display it on the television in the front pew.

Technology won't save us.

But with a simple two-step dance, it can help.

First step: Accessibility innovations make the world less hostile to people whose bodies are not perfectly healthy.

Second step: Those innovations give people tools to participate fully in human life, especially when step 1 is absent.



Think of it this way: Curb cuts are first-step innovations. Robot legs are second-step innovations. They are not perfect yet, but you can already buy a pair for about a thousand dollars and go hiking.



My Own Limitations

These days I can't read prescription bottles without reading glasses and a flashlight. Overall, I'm fortunate. My joints still work. I can usually go wherever I

want, whenever I want. I'm grateful when I run into limitations that I don't need help and doubly grateful that when a restaurant menu is too small to read, I can just take a picture and enlarge it instead of asking the waiter to read it to me. It would be even better if everything was 20 point, but maybe that is a step one bridge too far!

What Jesus' Healings Actually Do

When Jesus heals someone, the miracle often restores them to the center of their community. The healing itself may not be the main point. The real transformation is social reintegration. The healed person returns to family, neighborhood and synagogue. Their restored presence forces the community to reconsider dignity. In other words, both the person and the community are healed.

Everyday Miracles

Let's marvel when a miraculous healing happens. But we should also stand in awe when people who remain "unhealed" discover dignity because they no longer must beg for access.

The ADA and the Ripple Effect

Many accommodations that began for people with disabilities are now ordinary parts of daily life that benefit everyone. Electric toothbrushes and phone dictation were originally developed to assist people with physical limitations. Now they are common conveniences. Everyday miracles happen when we shape the world so that it is less hostile to human vulnerability. Even the strongest and fittest eventually slow down.

Some rapid-fire thoughts

- *Blame Is Rejected Immediately* "Who sinned, this man or his parents?" Jesus looks past the cause of suffering to revelation.
- *The Mud is Creation imagery* We are formed out of the earth – Genesis.
- *The Blind Man's Theology* evolves from confusion to transformation. The Man goes from "Jesus" to "Lord" and becomes a fearless advocate.
- *Healing messes with the barriers* that his community had created. People were convinced that he must be a sinner. He can't have been healed and there must have been a look alike pretending to be him.
- *Miracle of Recognition* the healed man meets Jesus again after being expelled. He receives both sight and revelation. "He came and saw"
- *The courtroom drama flips* The Witness on the stand, the healed man, was being investigated by the Pharisees. But the verdict flips: the one on trial is the people and system judging him.

*Have a good week,
Todd*