



## MEETING JESUS

November 2016

*Jesus heard that they had thrown him out [of the synagogue], and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.*

John 9:35-38

The above Scripture describes what happened after Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath. When the man was brought before the Pharisees they questioned him, trying to determine if it had been Jesus who healed him, suspecting Jesus to be breaking their law by working on the Sabbath. The Pharisees were proud and arrogant religious leaders. They had contempt for Jesus who challenged the validity of their rules and regulations.

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When they didn't get answers from the healed man, the Pharisees interrogated his parents. His parents would not answer either, fearing they would be shut out of the synagogue. When the Pharisees again turned to the man, hoping to hear something that would incriminate Jesus, the man avoided giving straight answers. They abused and insulted him, accusing him of being Jesus' disciple. But he stood firm. The Pharisees responded by casting him out of the synagogue.

So here he was, rejected, shut out of his religious community. That must have been painful. Where would he join with others to worship God? How would you feel if you had to leave your church, leaving everyone and everything you knew behind?

It was at this point that Jesus came looking for the man he had healed and revealed Himself to him. Encountering Jesus in this way was welcome consolation for the pain he had suffered. To have Jesus seek him out after such rejection was exactly what he needed. He came closer to Him than he would have if he had not been cast out of the synagogue. Now he *truly* met Jesus. The man turned to Him and worshiped Him.

Many of us have had occasions when we were rejected. For some the memories seem to repeat themselves over and over. As long as people are human this kind of situation can happen.

How could we best deal with the pain?

One thing we can be sure of is that Jesus never rejects us. When we believe in Him, He will be there for us. He does not wait for *us* to come to Him, but *He's* the one who will come to us, as He did for the man in this story. When Jesus comes during especially hard times we can experience Him in ways unlike any others. The love we receive when we most need it—when we're hurting badly—tends to affect us more deeply than any other. It's healing.

When you're in pain, think of where Jesus might be in all this. Think of the man He was when He walked the earth two thousand years ago. Bring to mind the stories of love and compassion He showed the prostitute, the tax collector, the blind man—all the people He befriended and healed. You will know that He's ready to come to you too. Do you believe?

Jesus' love is still alive today—here for you and me.

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