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I got so tired of people asking me what sin I had done that caused my son to be born blind. I never had a good reply, because in our day, when bad things happened, we believed that someone had sinned. In the case of my son, he could not be the one to blame, for he was blind when he was born. What could he have done in the womb to deserve such a thing? Many suggested his blindness must have been due to his mother or me. But I could never think of anything I had done, nor could my wife. We searched our memories over and over again, but we had no answer when someone asked why our son was blind. It would have been foolish to say that God was the cause, for God is good and only punishes those who sin. Oh, I wasn't perfect. I made mistakes, just like you do, but nothing to cause my son to be blind.

I'll never forget the day we took him to the city when something amazing happened. He heard others begging by the city gate, and he insisted that he should also ask for money to help support our family. His mother did not want to leave him there

alone, but our son insisted, so we let him sit by the gate while we continued our shopping.

After a few hours, we returned to the gate, and by then a crowd had gathered. Our son came running up to us, exclaiming, "I can see, Father! I can see you, Mother!"

At first I thought this was a cruel joke that the crowd had put him up to, but when he could describe what we were wearing and the purchases we had made, I knew he was telling the truth. All I could say was, "How did this happen? How can you see?"

He replied, "A man named Jesus made some muddy paste from his saliva and dirt and spread it on my eyes, and then he told me to wash in the pool of Siloam, and now I can see!"

Many felt the pool was filled with holy water, for the place had quite a story. Eight centuries earlier King Hezekiah had built a tunnel extending from a natural spring through the walls of the city to this pool of water. His tunnel ensured that the residents had a constant source of water if warriors

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surrounded the city walls. In my day, many people gathered at these waters for healing, so I could understand why my son went to the pool of water.

But mud made from spit? At first, I didn't understand. It was many years later that I heard about a blind man in Rome who had been told to take blood of a white rooster, mix it with honey and eye salve, and spread on his eyes for three days. But Jesus did something even more amazing—no special rooster or blood, just spit and dirt and water—everyday stuff. This man named Jesus could even tell stories using everyday objects—such as sheep, flowers and birds, mustard seeds, and even bread and wine.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. That day my son was healed, some religious leaders heard what had happened and questioned him. They were not happy that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, for one was not supposed to do any form of work on this holy day. I wondered, *was healing considered working? Couldn't they make an exception for this amazing event that helped my son to see?*

When my son explained what had happened, the leaders arguing amongst themselves, and finally one of them asked me, "Is this your son?" I nodded, and then he asked, "Was he born blind?" I nodded again, and he replied, "How is it he can see?"

Questions. Questions. Couldn't they just *see* what had happened? I offered them a sarcastic answer, "I know this is my son, and he was born blind, but how he can see, I do not know. Ask him yourself. He's old enough to speak for himself."

I don't think they were happy with my reply, but then my son continued the sarcasm as he said, "Jesus opened my eyes, yet you don't know where he comes from? We know God does not listen to sinners but to anyone who obeys. Jesus opened my eyes. If he wasn't from God, he could not have done anything. I can see anew. Why can't you see this?"

Needless to say, they threw us out, but then we found Jesus and placed our faith, our trust, in him. We knew he was from God. We could see anew. My son's eyes could see, and now I could see that God had sent this man of hope.

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As I reflect on that day, I realize that Jesus didn't look for someone to blame for my son's blindness. It wasn't a matter of sin, but my son's blindness offered Jesus an opportunity for healing. That's what he did for everyone—he healed them. He didn't blame. Didn't tell them they had done something wrong or that they weren't working hard enough. When he saw someone in need, he stopped. Listened. And helped them.

I later learned a prayer that Jesus taught his followers, and one line especially caught my attention: "Forgive us our sins and our debts as we forgive those who sin against us or owe us money." Jesus didn't focus on the mistakes we've made or what we owed others, for we all mess up our lives or owe someone something. Just like he didn't try to discern who was to blame for my son's blindness, he didn't focus on blaming others for their mistakes. He pointed toward the healing of sins, toward the forgiveness of debts, for moving

beyond the boundaries of trespassing on another's property. We all sin, overspend our resources, or cross boundaries. Jesus wasn't encouraging us to do those things, but when we mess up our lives, Jesus encouraged us to move beyond our mistakes, to learn from what we did wrong, and to see a better way to live. Jesus helped my son to see again, and he helped me see anew.

How might Jesus help you see better as well? It means more than having the correct lenses in your glasses. Look around. Where might you see an opportunity to offer forgiveness? Where might you see an chance to help someone in need? When you see someone suffering, rather than blaming them or telling them to work harder, maybe you could instead see an opportunity to offer a listening ear or a helping hand. By doing so, maybe even you will be seeing anew.