

My daughter, Sharon, asked me to listen to a song on the internet that reminded her of me. When I clicked on the site, the words to "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" filled my room with praise to God. I know a lot of churches don't sing the old hymns anymore, but the words to that song are priceless. It goes like this: What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the Everlasting arms. What blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the Everlasting arms. The soft music that accompanies these words is comforting. We have a friend that sticks closer than a brother who cares about us and desires to have a relationship with us. We reach out to him when we pray. I love to read the book of James. He was our Lord's brother and his book is introduced to us with these words: From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a process for him to come to the knowledge that his elder brother was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God. After Jesus rose from the dead, he revealed himself to James and here we have the record of his testimony. There are many ways in which Jesus reveals himself to us. In James chapter 4, it begins by asking a question. Do you know where your fights and arguments come from? They come from the selfish desires that war within you. You want things but you don't have them. So you are ready to kill and are jealous of other people, but you still can't get what you want. So you argue and fight. You do not get what you want, because you do not ask God. Or when you do ask, you don't receive it because your motives are wrong. You want things so you can use them for your own pleasure.

You are being disloyal to God because loving the world makes you an enemy of God. The Spirit of God that God desires to place within us wants us for himself alone. The Scripture says "God is against the proud, but he gives grace to the humble."

So give yourself completely to God. Stand against the devil and he will run from you. Come near to God and God will come near to you. You, sinners, clean sin out of your lives. Those who are trying to serve God and cling to this world system at the same time, purify your thinking. Be sorry for your sinful desires and don't be too proud in the Lord's presence and he will make you great. Do you take time to talk to the Lord?

I love the story about the blind man that Jesus healed. In John 9:1, the disciples were walking along with Jesus when they came upon a man that had been born blind. The disciples asked Jesus "Who sinned causing this man to be born blind, his parents or was it his own sin? Jesus answered that neither he nor his parent's sin caused him to be blind. The man was born blind that God's power could be shown to him. How often do people judge us when we are going through difficulties in life? They may point fingers and make comments about the fact that hardships are coming because of some sin that we committed and we are paying for it. It is better to leave judgment to God, because he may be just preparing us for a new revelation of his power in our lives to bring us in a deeper relationship with him. Jesus approached the man, spit on the ground and made a mud cake and placed it on the man's eyes. He then told him to go to the Pool of Siloam and

wash there. (Siloam means sent.) The man obeyed and he went, washed and came back seeing. People began to ask questions, "Isn't this the man that was a beggar because he was blind? Why he sat right over there and people took pity on him and gave him alms." Some said, "Yes, he is the one." Some skeptics said, "No, he only looks like him."

The man said, "I am the man." They asked, "Well, how did you gain your sight?" He gave a simple statement. "Jesus made mud cakes, put them on my eyes and sent me to the Pool of Siloam to wash and when I did that, I came back seeing." The next question was "Where is this man?" The man replied, "I don't know." As you read this story, you learn that this man was not an expert in the Law. He didn't know the ins and outs of the Jewish teachings. He had some understanding and he clung to that. When the Pharisees tried to dissuade him from believing that Jesus healed him through the power of his Father, the man didn't buy into that. They told him that Jesus didn't keep the Sabbath because he healed on the Sabbath. They told him that Jesus was an imposter; the man didn't buy into that lie either. The people were divided on their opinions of who Jesus was. Some said he couldn't be from God and others said that he couldn't do wonderful things without being anointed by God. They asked the man "What do you say about him?" He replied, "He is a prophet." The Jews didn't believe that he had been born blind and now could see so they asked his parents. His parents feared being thrown out of the synagogue so they told the Jews that their son was of age, ask him. They didn't want to lose their position in the religious world or in the community. They did admit he had been born blind, but they wouldn't get into any other discussion concerning his condition. Again the young man was approached and this time they said to him, "You should give God the glory by telling the truth. We know that this man is a sinner." The man replied, "I don't know if he is a sinner, but one thing I do know: I was blind and now I see." They pressed him to change his story, but he wouldn't do that. He said, "I already told you and you don't believe. If I repeat it again, will you be his disciples?" They insulted the man and accused him of being a follower of Jesus, but they followed Moses. The man answered, "That is strange that you don't know where he came from. We all know that God does not listen to sinners, but he listens to anyone who worships and obeys him. Nobody has ever heard of anyone giving sight to a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

They answered by throwing it up in his face that his blindness was a result of his sin and what right did he have to try to teach them?" They then threw him out of the synagogue. Jesus heard about it and went to him. He asked him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "Who is the Son of Man, sir, so that I can believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "you have seen him. The Son of Man is the one talking with you." He said, "Lord, I believe" and he worshipped Jesus. Jesus said that he came to open blinded eyes..

The man was open to a revelation of Jesus Christ and his spiritual eyes were opened also.