

## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

***By His Word of the Gospel, Jesus Calls Us Out of the Darkness into His Marvelous Light***



### ***Healing of the Man Born Blind El Greco 1567***

(God allowed Israel to be conquered by a heathen nation, and even then, they did not learn their lesson). Christ healed a man who was blind from birth on the Sabbath. Again, Jewish leaders claimed it was not God that healed him, because God would not do such a thing on the Sabbath. However, they also knew that only God could perform such a miracle. So while he was able to open the blind man's eyes to recognize him as the Messiah, the Jewish leaders remained blind to the Messiah, by the hardness of their heart. (Such rejections remain common today by all people who use their logical mind to reject Christ as their Lord and Savior) Paul tells the Ephesians, we should study God's word, so the Holy Spirit can 'enlighten' us, and we can live as "Children of Light".

**Background:** During Lent, the Epistle lesson brings the Old Testament lesson and the Gospel together in a coherent point. Last week's lessons dealt with Spiritual thirst and how God generously gave water out of a rock, even though Israel grumbled against Him. This week we deal with Spiritual blindness and are admonished to become the children of light. The women at the well was promised Living water and she shared it with her townspeople so they too could come to faith. Isaiah gives God's admonition to Israel that it was their rejection of His Word that brings them both earthly and eternal destruction.

**The Lessons: Isaiah 42:14–21, Ephesians 5:8–14, John 9:1–41 or John 9:1–7, 13–17, 34–39** The Lord is grieved by the spiritual blindness of His people, yet in mercy He does not forsake them. He restrains His anger and keeps His peace, until He opens their ears and eyes to hear and see Him. "*For his righteousness' sake,*" He magnifies His Word and makes it glorious in the coming of Christ Jesus (Is. 42:21). Jesus turns "*the darkness before them into light*" (Is. 42:16) because He is "*the light of the world*" (John 9:5). The incarnate Son of God does the works of His Father and displays the divine glory in His own flesh "*while it is day,*" until that night "*when no one can work*" (John 9:4). By the washing of water with His Word, He opens the eyes of the blind and grants rest to the weary. Therefore, though "*at one time you were darkness,*" now "*you are light in the Lord*" (Eph. 5:8). By our Baptism into Christ, we live in the eternal day of His resurrection, wherein He shines upon us. As often as we fall back into the darkness of sin, He calls us by the Gospel to "*awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead*" (Eph. 5:14).