

SERIES: Four of My Favorite Chapters in the Bible

SERMON: **Light for Blind Eyes**

SCRIPTURE: John 9

SPEAKER: Michael P. Andrus

DATE: July 17, 2011

Note to readers: The Scripture was read early in the service.

Please listen carefully to the Word of God as found in John 9:1-34. I will be reading from the NIV this morning because I love the way it tells the story.

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

"How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded.

He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

"Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided.

Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

The man replied, "He is a prophet."

The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

"We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind.

But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ

would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner."

He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."

The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

I'll never forget Leo. Back in the early '50s he attended the church my father pastored in Webster Groves, MO. He carried a great big, thick Bible and he always brought his dog with him to church. Leo was born totally blind. He could read braille and even sang solos from braille song sheets. I was so fascinated by Leo that I used to close my eyes and walk around trying to understand what his world was like. Of course, that was impossible. We can try as we might to imitate what it is like to be blind; we can even put on blindfolds, but it's still a world of difference from experiencing blindness, because the first time we run into a piece of furniture we can take off the blindfold and open our eyes. Leo couldn't do that.

But even though we can never experience blindness from birth, we can perhaps imagine how some of life's most pleasurable experiences would change if the visual aspect were eliminated. What would mountain climbing be like if you couldn't see the mountain? Who would endure the pain if there were no reward in the beauty seen from the top? And how could a blind person comprehend the rainbow in this picture? What would you miss from a child's laugh if you couldn't see the expression on his or her face?

Consider other sights you would have little appreciation of: an art gallery, a coral reef, fireworks, a beautiful woman, the Grand Canyon, a fireplace. Take that fireplace. A blind person can gain a certain perception of some things by feeling them, but he can't touch fire. There would simply be no way to comprehend the beauty of a fire. I learned this week that 85% of the information our brain receives from our five senses comes through vision. Ten percent comes from hearing. Five percent comes from the other senses combined. Friends, I believe a case can be made for the fact that blindness from birth is physical disability at its worst.

Physical disability at its worst (1-5)

Oh, I know it isn't as painful as some disabilities. And I know that many blind people have excelled in music, the arts, science, and writing, whereas some other disabilities by their very nature prevent success in these areas. But from the standpoint of sheer deprivation of enjoyment of the beauty God has created, I think blindness from birth may be the worst. Perhaps that is why Jesus noticed the man in John 9 and had compassion on him.

This encounter is one of the most moving stories from the life of Christ, and it reveals better than perhaps any other biblical passage the hopelessness of the human condition, the bankruptcy of religious traditionalism, and the power of faith in God.

The story opens with this observation: "As He went along, He saw a man blind from birth." When Jesus passed through an area it was always with His eyes open, looking for people in need. I must confess that even though I enjoy ministering to people, I prefer to schedule them. I don't even mind the long hours it takes to deal with people in need, but I find myself wishing they would plan their crises so that not too many fall in the same week.

Furthermore, when I'm just passing through on my way from here to there, I tend to be focused on the destination—no interruptions, no stops, just get there. Isn't it ironic that we can even be on our way to help someone and pass right by someone needing help even more? Not Jesus.

It must have been the way He looked at the young blind man that caused His disciples to take note. They had been in training for about three years now, and to me they are rather like 3rd year seminary students. Anxious to show off their theological acumen they ask Jesus a profound question about this "case" they have come across. And that is the problem—they see this man as a case to be analyzed and to be theologically categorized, rather than as a person in need.

It was common in those days to view any and every misfortune as a direct result of personal sin. In fact, the Rabbis of Jesus' day believed a person could commit sin while still in the womb. And that's what's behind their question, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" It's a logical question, if you believe there is always a direct one-on-one correlation between sin and sickness. And of course, sometimes there *is*. The crack babies born in our hospitals, those killed by drunk driving, and the vast majority of AIDS victims suffer because of disobedience to God's commands—either their own or someone else's.

But the disciples don't seem to be in any doubt about this case, for they don't ask *if* anyone sinned, just *who*? And Jesus responds, "Neither. Neither this man nor his parents sinned." He doesn't mean, of course, that the man and his parents are sinless, for no one is. Nor does He mean that sin had *nothing* to do with this man's blindness, for the Bible makes it clear that the world we live in is a broken world, full of hurt and damage and injury and tragedy, due to the Fall. Rather what Jesus means is that there is no direct, causal relationship between this man's physical disability and personal sin on the part of either him or his parents.

Instead this man's suffering "happened," according to Jesus, "so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." Some are immediately troubled by the thought that God is "using" this poor man, depriving him of sight for years so God can make a point. I find it interesting that Jesus avoids identifying the immediate cause of the blindness—He doesn't say God struck him blind, or that Satan did it, or even that it was due to natural causes. Still God was at least aware that this man would be born blind, and furthermore, He allowed it. So the charge of "using" the man is still something we have to wrestle with. But let me ask you a personal question:

Would you rather be one of the nameless millions who have been born, lived, and died on this planet with their eyesight intact but have never met Jesus or even heard of Him? Or would you prefer to be this young man, blind until perhaps his late teen years but then confronted by Jesus Christ, healed instantaneously, and, as frosting on the cake, known by his testimony to hundreds of millions through 20 centuries of church history?

I wouldn't even hesitate—I'd rather be this man.

By the way, we all have disabilities—some more obvious than others, some more serious than others—and they all have the potential to either destroy or display. They can destroy if we feel sorry for ourselves, get angry at God, and vent our bitterness at those we deem responsible for our misfortune. I know a woman who was born severely disabled who has been abusing the people close to her for years because of her anger and bitterness. She has allowed her disability to destroy.

But disabilities can also display the work of God in our lives if we seize the day, compensate for our weaknesses, and become all we can possibly be with God's help. When you look at what some disabled believers have accomplished in this world—the likes of Fanny Crosby, Joni Eareckson Tada, Ken Medema, and Nick Vujicic come to mind (if you don't know that last name, Google "man with no arms or legs" and watch the You Tube video)—you begin to understand that even without divine healing, disabilities can become incredible opportunities for the glory of God to be displayed in a person's life.

To take just one of the examples just mentioned, Fanny Crosby, who wrote hundreds of our hymns, was blind from her earliest childhood as a result of an accident. When she was only eight years old she wrote this little rhyme,

*Oh, what a happy child I am,
Although I cannot see.
I am resolved that in this world,
Contented I will be.
How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't.
To weep and sigh
Because I'm blind,
I cannot and I won't!*

She lived for 82 more years, and that same spirit characterized her whole life, despite the fact she was never healed.

In the case of this blind man, however, God chose to display His work through . . .

Divine power at its best (6-12)

Jesus heals the man immediately and completely, but in a most unexpected manner. Have you given some thought as to why Jesus might have done this miracle the way He did? I wonder if perhaps He used the clay to draw attention to His creative powers. Just as God created man from the dust of the ground, so Jesus uses the dust of the ground to create eyesight for this man. Others have suggested the mud pack was designed to double the intensity of the blindness in order to magnify the cure, not unlike Elijah's pouring of water over the altar on Mount Carmel before calling for fire from heaven.

Whatever other reasons Jesus had for doing this, we see quite a contrast between the blind man's response to Jesus' command to go and wash in the pool of Siloam and the response of another person in the Bible ordered to go wash in order to be healed. When the prophet Elisha refused to see Naaman but sent a messenger saying he would be healed of leprosy *only if* he would wash seven times in the Jordan River, he turned and went off in a rage. But the Scripture tells us:

"Naaman's servants went to him and said, 'My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!" So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy." (2 Kings 5:13-14)

I believe this OT account reveals a lot about human nature. We are far more inclined to perform great religious deeds than we are to humble ourselves before God and simply obey. But the blind man in our story is not too proud to follow Jesus' instructions. It says, "So the man went and washed, and came home seeing."

I sent a rough draft of this sermon earlier in the week to a good friend of mine—one who knows a lot more about blindness than I will ever know. We had a fascinating conversation about it, and there's one thing I would like to have him come up and share with you—something I had never thought of—about the nature of this miracle. It was far more amazing than I had realized. Sanford Alexander, will you come up and bring your little friend, Ringer, with you.

When Mike said: "In the case of this blind man, God chose to display His work through... Divine power at its best," and that "Jesus heals the man immediately and completely, but in a most unexpected manner," several thoughts occurred to me.

First of all, as a blind person, I realize that God can choose to heal one individual and not another. I am still blind, even after giving my life to Jesus and relying upon Him for my salvation. That's OK.

Second, although Mike has presented several incredibly insightful observations related to the futility or at least the limitations, of trying to "imagine" what it is like to be blind, he overlooked one of the most profound aspects of the miracle reported.

There is a tremendous difference between the dynamics involved with a person recovering from a recent onset of a disability as opposed to those experienced by a person who has possessed the disability from birth. This is where the miracle within the miracle or the full scope of the miracle is found.

An individual who regains vision has an entire storehouse of visual memories from which to draw. This information is used in the rehabilitation process. Memories from the time when one could see assist in acquiring the tools to move forward. A certain level of shock is inevitable when a person's sight is regained.

Many years ago, 1969 to be precise, I was working with a Braille student who had lost his sight and was scheduled for cataract surgery. In those days, the surgery was not quite experimental but not far removed from it either, the procedure was done on an inpatient basis, and it was not even attempted until all of a person's vision was gone. So, my student was totally blind when he had the surgery.

It was successful, but his brain was so shocked by the deluge of data that overwhelmed him that he literally tried to jump out of a hospital window. It took time for him to regain mastery of the data he was once again receiving. This is normal for those who recover their sight most need considerable psychological counseling to enable them to return to normal living.

But our blind man in the miracle was blind from birth. Can you even imagine the shock his brain experienced when he was suddenly bombarded with information that was totally foreign to his experience? Yet, we are told: "So the blind man went and washed, and came home seeing."

We often hear that God can do anything, but this miracle goes much further than the restoration of sight. What is clearly recounted is a deeper miracle that enabled this blind man to receive his sight and simultaneously adjust to the incredible shock it presented to his system. He didn't try to jump out of a window, he didn't go mad, he wasn't confused by the data that was new to his consciousness and totally foreign to his experience: No, it says in essence, the man went and did what Jesus told him to do. Then he went home and apparently began functioning as a normally sighted person. God did the whole job! He fixed the outside, the man's physical sight, and He fixed the inside, the man's mental and spiritual components which enabled him to use his newly gained sight immediately and to come back and stand up to the Pharisees whose spiritual blindness prevented them from acknowledging what was before their working human eyes.

There are other components of this story that excite me but the demonstration that God doesn't provide partial fixes is the one element that truly touched my soul.

Thank you so much, Sanford. Sanford had other insights which I appreciated so much. I will include some of that in the footnotes to this sermon.¹

The healing miracle is followed, naturally enough, by a rather vigorous discussion on the part of the man's neighbors regarding this unbelievable event. They ask *who, what, how, where?* But all of that is incidental to what they *do* in verse 13. It says, "They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind." If you don't know what to do with something you can't explain, you take it to the guys who are paid the big bucks to provide answers, and that brings us to the third movement in our text:

Religious traditionalism at its worst (13-34)

It would be difficult to understand the confrontation between the healed man and the Pharisees were it not for an editorial comment made by John in verse 14: "Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath." It is no accident that Jesus did this miracle on the Sabbath; He chose that day for an inordinate number of his miracles.

The Pharisees, as you well know, were shallow legalists and traditionalists. They didn't have a personal relationship with God, but only an institutional relationship with Him, which, in effect, is no relationship at all. Form was everything, substance nothing. Rite, ritual, and liturgy was the essence of their religious faith. And the only way to God, in their opinion, was to keep a list of rules a mile long and to do it their way.

Interestingly, their favorite rules were Sabbath rules. God had told them in the Ten Commandments to honor the Sabbath by worshiping and resting rather than working, so they decided to help God out by developing a vast system of regulations that spelled out what constituted work on the Sabbath.ⁱⁱ

To the Pharisees Jesus had broken several Sabbath laws. You certainly weren't supposed to make mud on the Sabbath, and you weren't even allowed to heal on the Sabbath. Interestingly, it was considered OK to keep a patient from getting worse but not to help him get better. But clearly, since this man couldn't get any blinder than he already was, and since he isn't in any immediate danger of dying from blindness, they conclude Jesus broke the Sabbath laws in healing him.

With that as background we can better understand the events that follow. The Pharisees begin innocently enough by questioning the man about the facts of the case, to which he answers in a very terse manner in verse 15: "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see." But then the Pharisees show their hand for the first time: "This man," speaking of Jesus, "is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But the verdict is far from unanimous, for others of their number ask, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?"

Interestingly both groups of Pharisees have significant gaps in their logic. As a former logic professor I see unsound hypothetical syllogisms in both their arguments. The first group uses an argument that might be expressed this way:

If this man were from God, he would observe the Sabbath.

This man does not observe the Sabbath.

*Therefore, this man is not God's man.*ⁱⁱⁱ

But is it true that Jesus has violated the Fourth Commandment, or has He only violated the Pharisaical interpretation of it? They seem to have forgotten that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. I would say that the second premise of their argument is false, and therefore the conclusion doesn't follow.

But the other group of Pharisees is in error, too. They also have a syllogism in mind:

If a man is a sinner, then he can't do miracles.

This man is a sinner.

Therefore, this man can't do miracles.

But the premise that a sinner can't do miracles is patently false, for the magicians of Pharaoh duplicated many of the miracles of Moses—not by the power of God but by the power of Satan. The second premise, too, is false, for Jesus was not a sinner. Once again the conclusion does not follow.

Somebody in the crowd finally gets the brilliant notion to ask the healed man what he thinks of Jesus, but then they wish they hadn't, for the man declares without a moment's hesitation, "He is a prophet." That is the one thing they don't want to hear.

I find it fascinating that in verse 18 we are told that the Jews doubted that the man was even blind. Do you grasp this? They would rather believe that he is a fraud who has spent his whole life faking blindness and choosing to live as a beggar than to believe Jesus has healed him, resulting in Him being recognized as a prophet.

When they call the man's parents, they clearly identify the man as their son and confirm that he was indeed born blind, but the parents refuse to comment further because they don't want to incur the wrath of the religious leaders—they don't want to be excommunicated, which had social and economic repercussions as well as religious ones. Since their son is of age, his parents suggest that the Pharisees ask him. So in verse 24 they call the healed man in again.

The Pharisees exhort the man, "Give glory to God." In other words, quit giving glory to this Jesus. Besides, they say, "We know this man is a sinner." Again they use fallacious logic, as their charge begs the question. They don't give any evidence that Jesus is a sinner, nor could they. They just assume it.

But then the man born blind uses this accusation about Jesus as his platform for what is one of the simplest and yet most profound testimonies ever uttered by human lips, which brings us to the fourth movement of our story.

Personal faith at its best (35-38)

In verse 25 the healed man speaks: "Whether Jesus is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know, I was blind but now I see!" I love the simplicity and honesty of those words. This man

doesn't claim to be a theologian or a logician, and he probably isn't equipped to debate philosophical issues. But he does know what happened to him and he knows Who did it, and that's all that matters to him. Friends, there is no more powerful display of the work of God than the simple testimony of a changed life. I doubt if anyone in this audience can say, "I was blind but now I see." But we can say,

"I was a greedy business man, but I have learned to put God first in my business. I had a terrible relationship with my wife, but now God has healed my marriage. I was a druggie, but now I don't need drugs to fill the vacuum in my life because God has filled it. Or simply, I was a self-centered, self-righteous do-gooder, but now I have something greater than myself to live for."

The Pharisees seem at a loss to know what to do with the man's testimony, so in verse 26 they resort to further interrogation. The man responds with none of the timidity and cowardice his parents have shown. "I have told you already," he says, "and you didn't listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" I've wondered where he got his courage to chide these religious traditionalists when everyone else cowered in fear before them. More than likely he had never been treated with respect by them, for the Pharisees were notorious for treating the disabled contemptibly. So what did he have to lose?

The Pharisees respond by insulting him. "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow Jesus, we don't even know where he comes from." At that the man combines spiritual insight beyond his years with a charming touch of sardonic humor. "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes!"

And once again the religious traditionalists follow their procedural manual, which states, "If you can't argue with a guy's logic, slander him!" And so in verse 34 they use a vicious *ad hominem* argument on him: "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" In other words, "You illegitimate upstart!" Or as *The Message* translates it, "You're nothing but dirt!"

The last words of verse 34 are these: "And they threw him out;" they excommunicated him. It's not that unusual, by the way, to see violence follow when reason is abandoned. Sad? In a way, but not entirely. He lost his religion but he found Jesus. Or as an ancient writer put it, "The Jews cast him out from the Temple, and the Lord of the Temple found him." Friend, that's not a bad exchange any day of the week.

Thankfully Jesus is just as concerned about the man's spiritual condition as his physical condition. He has already healed his body; now He wants to heal his soul. Let's read verses 35-38:

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, 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.

Can you see the progression of this man's faith? It started back in verse 11, where he refers to Christ simply as "The *man* they call Jesus." By verse 17 he has advanced to seeing Jesus as "a prophet,"—still inadequate but a step in the right direction. By verse 38 he sees Him as the Lord to be worshiped.

We conclude with . . .

A profound postscript on incurable blindness (39-41)

Let's read the last three verses of the chapter:

Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains".

I believe this miracle constitutes an acted-out parable about sight and blindness in the spiritual realm. You know, two things can happen when a bright light shines in a dark place. Turn over a board that has been lying on the ground and you can observe both. The bugs and insects will scurry for cover, blinded, as it were, by the light. But the yellow grass will almost immediately begin to respond to the light by drinking in the sun's rays and within a few days it will green up.

Jesus' coming into the world as the light also served a two-fold purpose: (1) so that the proud who think they see can be shown for the blind people they really are, and (2) so that those who admit they are blind can see the truth for the first time.

Apparently some of the Pharisees overhear this conversation between Jesus and the healed man. Their reaction is an incredulous question: "Is He calling us blind? He can't be serious! We're the religious teachers of the Law. We're the experts! He can't be calling us blind, can he?" Notice that Jesus doesn't respond as we might expect. He doesn't say, "Yes, you are as blind as bats!" His approach is more subtle and in the process, He teaches a critical spiritual lesson: "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains." In essence what He is saying is that there are two kinds of blindness—the blindness of the ignorant and the blindness of those who should know better.

If their blindness were a result of real ignorance they could not be blamed for acting as they did. But since they know the teachings of Scripture and claim to have much spiritual knowledge and are even proud of their knowledge, they are profoundly guilty for acting as they have. The worst blindness in all the world (in fact, the *only* blindness that is incurable) is the blindness of unbelief in the face of clear evidence that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Do you know Him today as a mere man? Even a great man? That is not enough! Maybe you know Him as a prophet. There are many prophets, of course, but He is no mere prophet. You must know Him as Lord. He died for you that you might have forgiveness of your sins and eternal life.

Prayer: Father, the Lord Jesus once said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.” We pray that You will open our eyes that we who so often pride ourselves on our education and knowledge and competence and accomplishments might humble ourselves, might have the faith of a little child. Help us to acknowledge our own inadequacy and sin. Help us to come, like this man who was born blind, and worship at your feet, recognizing that you have come into the world to give us light in our darkness.

i. Sanford Alexander: *“It occurred to me that we have two levels of sight and two processes of healing. The miracle addressed physical blindness and sight restoration but we should recognize that it also can as easily refer to spiritual blindness and the more critical healing of salvation. The first may last for our life but the latter lasts for eternity.*

I would point out that in rehabilitation one of the prime goals is to assist an individual in identifying and understanding the limitations imposed by the illness or disability being addressed. As this process progresses, there is a marked tendency for the individual to become more “comfortable” with their situation. In fact, as rehabilitation reaches its resolution, and the tools that will enable a person to regain independence are mastered, there is often an embracing of the disability. As a consequence of this, other disabilities seem far more challenging and a person would decline surrendering the one that has been mastered in exchange for something else. Put simply, I have learned how to cope with blindness and can hardly imagine how I would be able to function without my hearing upon which I have come to heavily depend. Conversely, a deaf individual will likely find it hard to imagine how a blind person can survive without being able to see the beautiful, full world around them.”

ii. Let me comment on just one. The Pharisees ruled that you couldn't carry anything outside your home on the Sabbath, but if you tied a rope to your front door you could carry something as far as the rope reached, because the rope extended your home.

We may laugh at the absurdity of it, but did you realize that this kind of ruse is still carried on today? I lived in St. Louis for a total of 35 years—15 as a kid and 20 as a pastor. There is a very active Orthodox Jewish community there, and they have created a symbolic boundary, called an *eruv*, made largely from a world of fences, utility poles, cable wires, power lines and plastic rope. This *eruv* is 15 miles long and creates an area in which Orthodox Jews are allowed to perform tasks as basic as pushing a stroller that are otherwise banned outside on the Sabbath, a day intended for rest. Without an *eruv*, transporting objects on the Sabbath would not be allowed by the Orthodox rabbis. No pushing or carrying. No keys in pockets. All of this was published in

an article in the St. Louis Post Dispatch on April 8, 2005, in case you want to read the whole story.

iii. This happens to be a valid argument form, which simply means that if the premises were true, the conclusion could not be false. But the second premise is not true, thus the argument, while valid, is unsound.