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JOHN 9: THE BLIND MAN TRANSFORMED

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This exploratory case study examines John 9 and the reaction of the blind man to both Jesus Christ and the Pharisees' attempts at transformational leadership. Using socio-rhetorical criticism to examine the pericope revealed important themes. The blind man's motivation and manner of the progression through the pericope provided evidence of Jesus Christ and the Pharisees' leadership methods. Jesus Christ fulfills Bass and Riggio's four-component model of transformational leadership. The Pharisees are a closer match to pseudotransformational leadership.

I. INTRODUCTION

Biblical leadership studies provide many opportunities to look at the actions of Jesus Christ, a Prophet, or an Apostle in light of modern leadership theories. For example, Cooper examined Paul's transformational leadership (2005). Mabey, Conroy, Blakeley, and Marco (2017) focused on Christian ethical leadership, emphasizing the need for leaders to align their words and actions. These works and others show how scripture can help leaders deepen their understanding of leadership theory and practice.

This explanatory case study uses Bass and Riggio's (2006) models of transformational and pseudotransformational leadership to examine Jesus Christ's and the Pharisees' actions in John 9. In the pericope, both Jesus Christ and the Pharisees attempted to influence a blind beggar over the same set of circumstances. Jesus Christ healed the blind man, while the Pharisees encouraged the blind man to reject his

healer. The researcher seeks to determine if Jesus Christ exhibited transformational leadership in John 9 according to Bass and Riggio's model. The researcher also seeks to determine if the Pharisees exhibited pseudotransformational leadership according to Bass and Riggio's model.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

James MacGregor Burns introduced the concept of transformational leadership in 1978 (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass extended Burns' work and further developed the concept and a way to measure a leader's transformational characteristics. Bass and Riggio (2006) defined transformational leaders as those leaders who "stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity" (p. 3). Transformational leaders empower followers and align "the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 3). Bass and Riggio (2006) described four characteristics of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration.

Idealized Influence

Transformational leaders are role models (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Their followers "respect, admire, and trust them" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6). A transformational leader's followers identify with him or her and want to be like him or her (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass and Riggio (2006) identified two aspects of idealized influence: the behavior of the leader and the attributes followers perceive transformational leaders possess. Followers perceive transformational leaders as having "extraordinary capabilities, persistence and determination" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6). Transformational leadership can be directive or participative, but in either case, the follower trusts the leader and the ultimate decision (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass and Riggio found transformational leaders take risks for subordinates and view tasks as "joint missions" for the leader and followers to accomplish together (p. 28).

Inspirational Motivation

Transformational leaders "motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to the followers' work" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6). Inspirational motivation helps followers envision a desirable future state and provides followers with clear direction on how to achieve the shared vision (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass & Riggio (2006) noted transformational leaders display and engender optimism and enthusiasm. Transformational leaders help followers see their progress (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Inspirational motivation also includes thinking ahead and "creating self-fulfilling prophecies" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 28). Inspirational motivation leads to increased self-concept (Bass & Riggio, 2006). After they increased their self-concept, followers of transformational leaders grow to identify with the leader, individually and collectively (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Followers are then motivated by shared values and goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Finally, transformational leaders empower their "followers to perform beyond expectations" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 51).

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation involves allowing and encouraging subordinates to think creatively through challenging assumptions and reframing problems (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass and Riggio (2006) found followers' trust in leaders to not publicly criticize them to be an essential aspect of intellectual stimulation. Transformational leaders encourage followers to solicit problem solutions and do not reject followers' ideas because they are different from the leader's ideas (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Followers perceive intellectual stimulation when leaders question followers' assumptions and ask them to reaccomplish tasks they failed at (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Individualized Consideration

Transformational leaders mentor and develop their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). They provide a supportive climate for followers to learn as they achieve "successively higher levels of potential" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 7). Individualized consideration also requires leaders to view each follower as an individual, with unique needs and personalize their interactions with the follower (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Delegation of appropriate tasks is another way leaders show individualized consideration. Leaders and followers also exchange ideas on how to accomplish the tasks and what support the follower needs (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Christ as a Transformational Leader

Bass and Riggio (2006) described idealized influence and inspirational motivation as components of charismatic leadership behaviors. Piovanelli (2005) defined Christ as a charismatic leader to those who ascribe "a prophet-like status" (p. 397). He noted Christ inspired devoted supporters with his invitation to follow him (see Matt 4:19). Piovanelli (2005) argued scholars should move past the idea of Christ as just a great charismatic leader, but look at him as a transformational leader.

Fraye (2007) used Kouzes and Posner's model of transformational leadership to examine Christ's leadership. Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices share key concepts with Bass and Riggio's (2006) four components of transformational leadership (see Table 1). Kouzes and Posner's ten commitments identify behaviors transformational leaders perform (see Table 2). According to Frayer, Jesus Christ employed idealized influence via "profound integrity in word and deed" which established credibility in his message (p. 159). Christ challenged the process when he questioned his own followers' assumptions, values, and ideals (Fraye, 2007). He forced them to consider the answers to questions they did not want the answers to (Fraye, 2007). Christ also challenged their idea of what the Messiah would do for the Israelites (Fraye, 2007). These challenged assumptions are part of intellectual stimulation. Christ created a new, shared destiny to motivate his followers (Fraye, 2007). This shared destiny provided them with the support they needed to achieve the new, shared vision (Fraye, 2007).

Table 1

Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices Mapped to Bass and Riggio's Four Components

Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices	Bass and Riggio's Four Components
Model the Way	Idealized Influence
Inspire a Shared Vision	Inspirational Motivation
Challenge the Process.	Intellectual Stimulation
Enable others to Act	Individualized Consideration
Encourage the Heart	

Note. Adapted from *The Leadership Challenge*, by J. M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner, 2017. Copyright 2017 by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner and *Transformational Leadership* (2nd ed.), by B. M. Bass and R. E. Riggio. Copyright 2006 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Table 2

Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices and Associated Ten Commitments

Five Practices	Ten Commitments
Model the Way	Clarify values Set the example
Inspire a Shared Vision	Envision the future Enlist others
Challenge the Process.	Search for opportunities Experiment and take risks
Enable others to Act	Foster collaboration Strengthen others
Encourage the Heart	Recognize contributions Celebrate victories and values

Note. Adapted from *The Leadership Challenge*, by J. M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner, 2017. Copyright 2017 by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner.

Pharisees as Transformational Leaders

Langbert and Friedman (2003) argued the head rabbi of the Sanhedrin, the Nasi, during the Greek and Roman rule exhibited transformational leadership. Langbert and Friedman (2003) drew on rabbinical tradition to show how each Nesi'im's (the plural of Nasi) sayings and actions support the transformational leadership model proposed by Bass. While it is uncertain whether the Nesi'im were Pharisees or not, Langbert and Friedman's (2003) thesis was the Nesi'im must have been transformational leaders to keep the Jewish people together as a cultural and spiritual body in the face of so much opposition.

Pseudotransformational Leadership

Burns believed transformational leadership must be morally uplifting (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass (1985) initially argued transformational leadership would work the

same way whether the outcome was beneficial or harmful to the followers. Bass (1998) later accepted Burns' argument that transformational leadership must be moral.

Charismatic leadership theory developed the concept of socialized and personalized leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Socialized leaders engage in "egalitarian behavior, serve collective interests and develop and empower others" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 13). Personalized leaders "rely ... on manipulation, threat, and punishment" and "disregard the established institutional procedures and ... the rights and feelings of others" (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Personalized leaders are impetuous, narcissistic and aggressive (Bass & Riggio, 2006). According to Bass & Riggio (2006), what separates personalized leaders from socialized leaders is "whether the leader works primarily toward personal gains as opposed to focusing on the outcomes for followers" (p. 13). Personalized transformational leaders are inauthentic transformational leaders or pseudotransformational leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006). While they may produce transforming behavior, it is in their self-interest and not the followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The same components of idealized influence which create commitment and motivation can be used inauthentically to manipulate followers and produce dependence (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Bass and Riggio (2006) argued the distinguishing feature between authentic transformational leadership and pseudotransformational leadership is individualized concern for the follower. An authentic transformational leader is "truly concerned with the desires and needs of followers" (Bass & Riggio, 2006). A pseudotransformational leader treats followers as a means to an end (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leadership bases a large part of its influence on the attributes followers ascribe to the leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Lin, Huang, and Chen (2017) found a followers' perception of a leader's motivation determined whether followers perceived a leadership behavior as transformational or pseudotransformational. When followers perceived the leader as having manipulative intent they were more likely to perceive the leader's actions as pseudotransformational (Lin, Huang, & Chen, 2017). Lin et al. also found when followers perceive a manipulative intent they have lower organizational identification and lower performance.

III. METHOD

This explanatory case study examines the application of Bass and Riggio's (2006) transformational leadership model in John 9. Using Robbins (1996) social-rhetorical criticism (SRC) model, this paper focuses primarily on inner texture, as it reveals aspects of the text requiring further examination (Robbins, 1996). This paper then uses the other four SRC textures: (a) intertexture, (b) social and cultural texture, (c) ideological texture, and (d) scared texture as needed to identify elements relating to Bass and Riggio's transformational leadership model. Applying this model to Jesus Christ's and the Pharisees' actions in the pericope allows the researcher to contrast their effects on the blind man and how those effects derive from authentic and pseudotransformational leadership. The researcher believes this pericope is well suited for this task as it contains an example of both Jesus Christ's and the Pharisees' attempts to influence the same subject.

IV. DATA

Inner Texture Analysis

John 9 tells the story of a man who was born blind being healed on the Sabbath day by Jesus Christ and the healing's aftereffects. An inner texture analysis of the pericope identified multiple subtextures which guide further exploration in Robbins' (2006) other SRC textures. All five of Robbins' subtextures are examined to determine the pericope's application to transformational and pseudotransformational leadership.

Opening-middle-closing texture and pattern. John 9 possess three major narrational units. The transition between the major narrational units coincides with Christ's departure and subsequent return to the narrative. The opening unit, Christ taught his disciples and healed the blind man: John 9:1-7 (see Table 3), covered Christ's teachings on the causation of a blind beggar's blindness and his actions to restore the blind man's sight. The departure of Christ from the pericope closed the narrational unit.

Table 3

John 9 Narrational Units and Subunits (King James Version)

Christ taught his disciples and healed the blind man. John 9:1-7

1. And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.
2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?
3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.
4. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
5. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
6. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,
7. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

Discussion concerning the healing: John 9:8-34

Discussion of the manner of the blind man's healing: John 9:8-15

8. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?
 9. Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.
 10. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?
 11. He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.
 12. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.
 13. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.
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Table 3

John 9 Narrational Units and Subunits (King James Version)

14. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.
15. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

Discussion on the propriety of and nature of the healing: John 9:16-23

16. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.
17. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.
18. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.
19. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?
20. His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:
21. But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.
22. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.
23. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

The healed man refuted the Pharisees: John 9:24-34

24. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.
25. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.
26. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?
27. He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?
28. Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.
29. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.
30. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.
31. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Table 3

John 9 Narrational Units and Subunits (King James Version)

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32. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.
33. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.
34. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.
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Dialogue between Christ, the healed man and the Pharisees: John 9:35-41

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35. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?
36. He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?
37. And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.
38. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.
39. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.
40. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?
41. Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.
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The middle unit, discussion concerning the healing: John 9:8-34 (see Table 3), is a series of three dialogues, also in an opening, middle, and closing texture. The middle unit, discussion of the manner of the blind man's healing: John 9:8-15 (see Table 3), opened with the now healed man discussing the nature of his healing, first with his neighbors and then with the Pharisees. The middle portion, discussion on the propriety of and nature of the healing: John 9:16-23 (see Table 3), occurred as the Pharisees and others discussed amongst themselves and others the nature and propriety of the man's healing. The Pharisees attempted to engage the healed man's parents, who declined to become involved. The middle unit, the healed man refuted the Pharisees: John 9: 24-34 (see Table 3), closed when the Pharisees reengaged the man and tried to persuade him to reject the miraculous nature of his healing and the goodness of the healer. After the Pharisees failed to persuade the man to reject Christ and therefore cast him out of the synagogue the middle section closed.

The closing unit, dialogue between Christ, the healed man, and the Pharisees: John 9: 35-41, (see Table 3), reintroduced Christ into the pericope. Christ returned to complete the healing process by healing the man spiritually and the teaching process by declaring the false teachings of the Pharisees.

The opening-middle-closing subtexture highlighted two critical tasks for further examination. The first task is identifying the repetitive themes across the subsections of the pericope. According to Robbins (2006) examining repetitive portions of the text helps identify the author's thematic construction. The second task is examining the man's progressive healing, both in its physical and spiritual aspects. The blind man is the only character present in every narrational unit and subunit (see Table 3).

Determining whether he changed due to his interactions with Christ and the Pharisees allows examining the effects of Christ and the Pharisees' leadership behaviors.

Repetitive texture. Robbins (2006) defined progressive texture as the "occurrence of words and phrases more than once in a unit" (p. 8). Repetitive texture serves as a guide to reveal "overall rhetorical movements" provide the "overarching view" which "invites the interpreter to move yet closer to the details of the text" (p. 8). Two repetitive texture patterns relevant to transformational leadership exist in the periscope.

The pericope repeated the actions of three central individuals or groups, Christ, the blind man, and the Pharisees. Christ appeared as the main subject in the opening and closing section. He was the instrument of healing the blind man and one of two characters who teach. The blind man was the only character who appeared in all three sections. He progressed from blind beggar to follower of Christ. The Pharisees appeared in the middle and closing sections. In the middle section, they served as arbiters of Mosaic and Talmudic law, and in the closing section as an example for Christ to juxtapose physical and spiritual blindness. The significance of the repetition requires further analysis.

Sinning also forms a reoccurring theme. The blind man, his parents, Jesus, and the Pharisees are accused of being sinners (see Table 4). Christ absolved the man and his parents of being sinners (v. 3). Christ sinning is incompatible with Christianity (see 1 Pet. 2:22, 2 Cor. 5:21, and Heb. 4:15). Christ called the Pharisees sinners (v. 41). The repetition of the theme highlighted Christ's assertion the Pharisees were sinners due to spiritual blindness.

Table 4

Theme of sinning

Verse				Potential Sinner
2.	Who		Sinned	the man or parents
3.	Neither		Sinned	the man or parents
24.	This man	is a	Sinner	(Christ)
25.	He	is a	sinner or not	(Christ)
34	Thou	wast born	in sin	(blind man)
41	Your		sin remaineth	(Pharisees)

Progressive texture. The subjects identified in the repetition subtexture have different progression patterns throughout the pericope. Christ progressed others through the narrative. The man progressed in his acknowledgment and understanding of Christ. The Pharisees failed to help others progress while experiencing the same facts as the blind man.

Christ's words and actions in the pericope followed an ABBA pattern. Christ opened the narrative by teaching his disciples about the nature of physical blindness. Then he physically healed the blind man and departed. After the blind man progressed through a series of dialogues, Christ returned to heal the blind man spiritually. The pericope closed with Christ teaching the Pharisees about spiritual blindness. The

completion of the pattern highlighted how Christ individually addressed physical and spiritual suffering.

The blind man progressed in his knowledge of Christ (see Table 5). This progression reflected an increasing understanding of Jesus Christ and his divine role. Muderhwa (2012) wrote “elementary belief, before it becomes authentic, has to grow, or mature, in order to reach the decisive recognition of the identity of Christ. It is this route which the blind man follows” (p. 3). The recognition of identity culminated in verses 27 and 28 when the man asks the Pharisees if they “will...also be his disciples.” This suggests the man committed to becoming Christ’s disciple over the course of the pericope. The Pharisees’ declaration in verse 28 that the man is now “his disciple” supports this suggestion. As the man repeatedly recounted his story, he progressively increased his understanding of Christ’s true nature. At the end of the narrative, the blind man acknowledged Jesus Christ as the Son of God and worshiped him.

Table 5

Blind man’s progression in acknowledgment of Christ

Verse	Blind man’s description of Jesus
11.	A man called Jesus
17a.	He is a prophet
17b.	Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not
27.	will ye, also be his disciples
36.	Who is he (the Son of God) that I might believe on him?
38	Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

The Pharisees experienced the same underlying facts as the blind man but were not transformed. In verse 16, after they determined how the blind man received his sight they declared Jesus “is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day.” After questioning the man on his assessment of Christ, see Table 3, the Pharisees directed the man to praise God because Christ is a sinner (v. 24). After the man’s parents established his blindness from birth, the Pharisees acknowledged the man could see, but they rejected the manner of his healing.

Argumentative texture and pattern. John 9 contained two arguments which display the characteristics Robbins (2006) identifies in a complete Mediterranean argument. These two arguments reveal how the Pharisees and Christ applied or failed to apply the transformational leadership components.

The first argument was the Pharisees assertion that Christ’s actions were unrighteous. The structure of the argument follows.

Major premise 1 – Sabbath-breakers are sinners

Minor premise 1 – Making clay (kneading) is forbidden on the Sabbath (Bultmann as cited in Frayer-Griggs, 2013). Jesus Christ made clay on the Sabbath.

Conclusion 1 – Jesus Christ is a sinner

Major premise 2 – Sinners cannot do truly good works

Minor premise 2 – Jesus is a sinner

Conclusion 2 – Jesus cannot do truly good works

In John 9, the Pharisees argued a sinner cannot be a man of God or do truly good works (vv. 16, 24, & 29). Since Pharaoh's magicians duplicated some of Aaron's feats, a tradition existed that unrighteous people could duplicate the works of God (see Ex 7:1-12, 20-22, and 8: 6-7). Some Pharisees believed Jesus's actions constituted a Sabbath violation. Other Pharisees questioned, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" (v. 16). Ultimately the Pharisees concluded Jesus Christ was a sinner who could not do good works (vv. 16, 24, & 29).

The Pharisees' second argument was the blind man was also a sinner. Their argument follows.

Unstated major premise – Misfortune only comes as punishment for sin

Minor premise – The man is blind

Conclusion – The man or his ancestors sinned

The Pharisees asserted during their argument with the man regarding the nature of his healing that he "was born in sin" (v. 34). The argument's thesis is the man's blindness resulted from "divine" judgment as punishment for a sin (Tite, 1996, p. 85). Restated in general terms, the Pharisees' argument is bad things only happen as a result of sin.

Inter-texture Analysis

Oral-scribal intertexture. The narrative's use of oral-scribal intertexture demonstrated how Christ and the blind man challenged assumptions. Christ rejected the Pharisees and his disciples' assumptions about the nature of the man's blindness. Later in the pericope, after undergoing his transformation, the man also asserted a response questioning the Pharisees notion of sin. Challenging assumptions is part of intellectual stimulation (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Jesus said in John 9:5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." This verse recontextualized a phrase he used twice before. In the Sermon on the Mount, he said, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. 5:14). In John 8:12 he said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The recontextualization emphasized Christ's role as the perfect example for his followers. In declaring himself the light, he directed his followers to "identify with [him and] emulate" him (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6).

The healed man told the Pharisees "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (v. 31). His statement reconfigured two Old Testament passages regarding God's willingness to listen to the pleas of sinners. Psalm 66:18 reads "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Proverbs 15:29 states "The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous." These reconfigurations demonstrated the man gained the ability to see beyond his experience as a blind beggar.

Cultural intertexture. The blind man in this pericope started the narrative as a beggar (v. 8). While not all ancient blind persons were low status, begging indicated the man was a low-status individual (Opatrny, 2010). Both Jesus' disciples (v. 2) and the Pharisees (v. 34) regarded the blind man's blindness as a result of sin. This idea likely

resulted from Old Testament writings identifying blindness as a punishment from God (Sorsby, 2008). Without property or skill to counteract this cultural assertion his ostracization was assured.

The pericope contained several echoes to other scripture regarding the nature of spittle. The Bible generally presented spittle in a negative regard (see Num. 12:14, Job 30:10, and Isaiah 50:6). Cook (1992) however, noted contemporary culture viewed saliva as possessing “curative powers” (p. 245). In this pericope, Christ used spittle to make clay and heal the blind man. Christ also used spittle to heal the blind man of Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26) and the deaf-mute (Mark 7:32-37). These positive uses are echoed in other Bible uses where spittle shows contempt or an attempt to defile, particularly as rabbinical writings always identify spittle as an impure instrument (see Matt. 26:67, Mark 16:45, and Luke 18:32; Cook, 1992). Christ’s use of a popular instrument of healing instead of a rabbinically blessed healing instrument identifies him with the popular culture (Cook, 1992).

Social Intertexture.

Casting people out of the synagogue. Biblical Judaism’s leading social institution was the synagogue. Schechter and Greenstone (1906) wrote casting someone out of the synagogue “meant a practical prohibition on all intercourse with society” (para. 1). The punishment for “confess[ing] Christ” was being cast out of the synagogue. The implicit threat to the man’s parents deterred them from accepting their son’s healing (vv. 22-23). Christ explained, “neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents” demonstrating intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration for the blind man and his parents. The Pharisees made the same threat explicit when they cast the man out of the synagogue for confessing Christ (v. 34). When he was blind, the man was dehumanized and reduced to begging. Casting him out of the synagogue for believing the man who healed him was a restatement of his dehumanization (Cook, 1992).

Role of the Pharisees in Biblical Judaism. The Pharisees in pre-70 BCE were laity who desired to bring the temple’s ritual purity into everyday life (de Lacey, 1992). They believed secular meals should be consumed in the same state of ritual purity that a priest would eat a consecrated meal in the temple. Pharisees did this because they believed they were the “heart of the ‘kingdom of priests’ (Ex. 19:6) which was Israel” (de Lacey, 1992, p. 360). The Pharisees believed their ritual purity entitled them to be viewed as privileged, holy people worthy of honor and esteem from others (Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998). De Lacey (1992) argued the “the pharisaic *raison d’être* is a striving toward the highest holiness, as epitomized in the priestly service and expressed in the regulations of the Torah concerning purity” (p. 354).

Striving for ritual purity, the Pharisees possessed a secure, self-contained social identity which reinforced their social role as keepers of the Talmudic traditions. As a group of zealous Jews, they viewed their primary concern as maintaining the Mosaic’s law’s oral traditions and ritual purity (de Lacey, 1992; Taylor, 2000). The Jews viewed the Pharisees as “exemplars of wholesome living, of holiness, righteousness, compassion, and loving-kindness, preaching not only faithful adherence to the Torah’s injunctions but even pious imitation of God” (Taylor, 2000, p. 446). Therefore, it is understandable the man’s neighbors went to the Pharisees to help them make sense of

the man's healing. Based on the Torah and rabbinical traditions the Pharisees could determine the true nature of the man's healing.

Social and Cultural Texture Analysis

Thaumaturgical response. The blind man experienced thaumaturgical healing twice in the pericope. First, Jesus restored his physical sight (vv. 6-7). Then, Jesus spiritually healed him (vv. 35-38). The physical healing of the man's blindness sparked his increased understanding of Christ's true nature. This increased understanding led the man to declare his desire to follow Jesus (vv. 27 & 35-38). His discipleship led to being cast out of the synagogue and socially ostracized (Schechter & Greenstone, 1906; Muderhwa, 2012). Once the formerly blind man was cast out, Christ revealed himself to the man and healed him spiritually (v. 37).

Common social and cultural topics. Robbins (1996) identified several underlying cultural assumptions present in the biblical culture which are not present in modern western culture. Robbins argued modern readers must understand and account for these cultural assumptions to avoid an "ethnocentric and anachronistic interpretation" of scripture (p. 75).

In verse 37, the formerly blind man challenged the Pharisees regarding their intent to become Christ's disciples. His use of μή θέλω (*mē theō*) implies he expected a negative response from the Pharisees (Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998). This question was, therefore, a "sharp honor challenge" (Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998). The Pharisees would not accept an honor challenge from a beggar and therefore they "reviled" him (v. 28). Muderhwa (2012) argued the Pharisees were "acting in their judicial capacity identify themselves as 'disciples of Moses' to whom God spoke. They do not reveal the slightest interest in becoming disciples of 'that fellow'" (Muderhwa, 2012, p. 4). The Pharisees response suggested they considered the healed blind man unworthy of direct response (Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998).

The Pharisees viewed themselves as keeper of both the Torah law and the rabbinical traditions. They believed the traditional rabbinical interpretation of the Torah was equal in weight to the actual text (de Silva, 2004). The Israelites had Levites to execute the priesthood offices, but needed interpreters of the Torah and rabbinical traditions to guide their daily activities under the Mosaic law. As keepers and interpreters of rabbinical tradition, this placed the Israelites in a patron-client relationship with the Pharisees. The Pharisees had the power to determine an action's acceptability, granting them power over the Israelites. The Pharisees could call witnesses (vv. 18-21) and issue punishment (vv. 22 & 34). However:

Jesus offered an alternative means to religious fulfillment that was more sympathetic to the culture and socio-economic circumstances of the peasant societies amongst whom he taught, people for whom maintaining a constant state of ritual purity as though they were in the Temple was economically impracticable. (Taylor, 2000, p. 302).

Christ threatened the Pharisees' self-defined role of the Israelites' patron on religious matters. Accepting Christ as the Messiah, or even a religious leader weakened the Pharisees' power. The threat to the Pharisees' power caused them to threaten Christ's followers with being cast out of the synagogue (v. 22).

Ideological Texture Analysis

According to Robbins (1996) determining John's intended audience allows exegetes to understand the pericope's place with early Christian era writings and understand his intended message. Tite (1996) noted the early Christians considered themselves Jews and had concerns about what would happen if they were expelled from the synagogue like the blind man. John's use of Christ spiritually healing the blind man after his expulsion was part of John's attempt to redefine the early Christians' "religious and cultural identity" (Tite, 1996, p. 81). John used the blind man's experience of discovering Christ as the new Moses to support his position in the contemporary debate over the role of the Judaic past in the Christian future (Tite, 1996). John's account was intended to reassure his contemporaries their choice of faith in Christ was worth the sacrifice (Tite, 1996).

Sacred Texture Analysis

The search for the divine and divine influence is at the heart of the pericope. The great debate in the middle portion of the narrative concerns the nature of the man's healing. If Christ acted as an agent of God, he did not violate the Sabbath and it was a truly good work. If Christ was a sinner the work was a counterfeit act meant to deceive humankind into following a false leader.

Human redemption. The blind man is physically redeemed from blindness by Jesus Christ (vv. 6-7). The physical healing is a manifestation of the divine power to heal. The man and the Pharisees agreed the healing came from God (vv. 24 & 33). However, they disagree on if Jesus Christ is an agent of the divine redemption of the blind man. After the man is dehumanized by the Pharisees and cast out, Christ acted to redeem him from ostracization (Cook, 1992).

Human commitment. In John 9 the Pharisees and the man each committed to following a person whom they viewed as reflecting the divine. In verse 28-29 the Pharisees asserted their Mosaic discipleship. Harstine, as cited in Muderhwa (2012) wrote Moses became "a legendary figure or the religious authority who gave the law to Israel and who mediates between God and Israel" (p. 4). The Pharisees grounded their commitment in Moses, which was the source of their resistance to Jesus (Muderhwa, 2012). The healed blind man grounded his commitment in Jesus Christ.

V. RESULTS

Christ as an Authentic Transformational Leader

Using Robbins' (1996) ideological texture uncovered John's intended audience as his contemporaries (Tite, 1996). Tite (1996) identified an early debate among the Christians concerning the role of the Mosaic law. This same debate permeated the writings of Paul. Painter (1986) proposed one of John's primary goals with the pericope was to show a miracle wrought by Christ. Because many early Christians lived in the community of Jews as secret believers, the believers had concerns about the consequences of their belief being made public (Painter, 1986). John's inclusion of this account may be an attempt by him to show belief in Christ can overcome those

consequences.

The reconfiguration of spittle shows Christ used intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration towards the blind man. The dichotomy between an object's use as a healing instrument or an instrument of derision contrasts how similar behaviors can be transformational or pseudotransformational based on the leader's intent (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Idealized influence. Immediately before healing the blind man, Christ asserted he was the "light of the world" (v. 5). This assertion began Jesus' argument his behavior should be emulated. Transformational leaders "do the right thing" and demonstrate "high standards of ethical and moral conduct" (Bass and Riggio, 2006, p. 6). Over the series of dialogues in the middle texture, the man accepted the idealized influence of Christ by becoming his disciple (v. 27). This acceptance began, not when Christ healed the blind man, but when Christ did not judge him as others did (v. 3). Christ's acceptance started the man's transformation.

Inspirational motivation. The blind man's growth through the series of dialogues demonstrated an increased self-concept as a disciple of Jesus Christ (v. 27). This increased self-concept allowed him to reduce the power distance between himself and the Pharisees and critique their actions. The man progressed through inspirational motivation, ultimately performing beyond expectations, in debating scripture with the Pharisees and refusing to be cowed by them.

Intellectual stimulation. Table 4 shows how Christ challenged the prevalent cultural belief of blindness being a punishment for sin. When the disciples first encountered the blind man, their only concern was determining who had sinned, the man or his parents (v. 2). Sorsby (2008) noted this supposition is consistent with contemporary cultural belief and supported by the Old Testament. However, Christ challenged this assumption and declared the man's blindness occurred to enable God to manifest his works. Bass and Riggio (1996) noted followers perceive intellectual stimulation when leaders challenge their beliefs.

The man also demonstrated the results of intellectual stimulation when he debated with the Pharisees. He reconfigured Old Testament scripture, showing how God only hears the righteous to refute the Pharisees' assertions of Christ's sinful nature.

Individualized consideration. The pericope opened with Jesus Christ observing a blind beggar (v. 1). This observation resulted in Christ initialing the contact. This contrasted with other examples of persons with physical ailments seeking Christ out (for example Matt. 9: 20-22 and Luke 17:12-19). Christ identified the greater need within him, rather than supporting his begging. However, Bass and Riggio (2006) argued true individualized concern is a result of mutual identification of the follower's needs. This occurs in verses 35-38. After being cast out, the blind man identified his need to believe "on the Son of God" (vv. 35-36). Christ met that need by revealing his true nature to the man (v. 37). Leadership is ultimately an emotional process (Bass & Riggio, 2006). By showing individualized consideration, Christ invoked an emotional process to build relationships with his followers.

The Pharisees as Pseudotransformational Leaders

The Pharisees' role as leaders in Biblical times depended on two factors: (a) control over the interpretation of the Talmud and rabbinical tradition, and (b) the ability to enforce punishment on unorthodox views (De Lacey, 1992). This rooted their power, not in follower development, but follower control. Pseudotransformational leaders focus on control and compliance of their followers (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Bass and Riggio (2006) described pseudotransformational leaders as "tyrants [who] emphasize compliance...and identification" (p. 41). They perceived the man as their client and directed him to deny the experiences he had (see vv. 24 & 29). Pseudotransformational leaders strive to maintain status roles (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The Pharisees' motivation to reject Christ came from their need for power and inability to accept concepts inconsistent with their interpretation of the Mosaic law. The Pharisees' response towards the man typified pseudotransformational leadership.

A transformational leader would have displayed individualized consideration and addressed the needs of the blind man as a marginalized member of society (Bass and Riggio, 2006). As pseudotransformational leaders, the Pharisees needed the man's low, presumably sinful status, as a contrast to their high, righteous status (Bass and Riggio, 2006). The Pharisees demonstrated personalized pseudotransformational leadership with regards to the newly healed man's status. Pseudotransformational leaders are transactional; when the promised reward is insufficient followers will rebel against their leadership (Bass and Riggio, 2006). During his confrontation with the Pharisees, the man determined the reward for complying with the Pharisees' edicts was less critical than following the man who gave him sight (see vv. 30-34). However, the Pharisees used pseudotransformational transactional leadership behavior to coerce the man's parents to reject the miraculous healing their son experienced.

VI. DISCUSSION

Jesus Christ demonstrated the use of all four components of transformational leadership. The pericope also showed transformational leaderships theorized responses. Idealized influence led to the man declaring himself Christ's follower. Inspirational motivation increased the man's self-concept. Intellectual stimulation helped the man cast off any potential self-doubt on the nature of his blindness. Christ demonstrated individualized concern first, by healing his physical blindness rather than giving him money. Second, Christ returned to ensure the man could be sure of his choice and healed him spiritually.

The Pharisees in the pericope used fear as their primary motivational tool. The Pharisees possessed the implied ability to exclude their followers from society for expressing alternative ideas. Bass and Riggio (2006) argued a key tenant of intellectual stimulation is not publicly criticizing followers' mistakes. The Pharisees reviled the blind man's beliefs and felt him unworthy of a response (Malina & Rohrbauch, 1998). Ultimately the Pharisees' coercive motivation was insufficient to keep the blind man as a follower. He rejected the Pharisees' pseudotransformational leadership for Jesus Christ's transformational leadership.

VII. CONCLUSION

Christ acted as a transformational leader in John 9. The Pharisees acted as pseudotransformational leaders. Future research should examine the ability to generalize these statements across all the sacred texts. In addition, demonstrating Christ lived the behaviors modern scholars identify with transformational leadership, allows Christians to argue scriptural compatibility with transformational leadership. This allows Christian leaders to incorporate transformational leadership behaviors in their leadership repertoire.

About the Author

Matthew Thrift is a doctoral student in Regent University's Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership program. Prior to graduating college, he served for two years as a missionary in Taiwan. He holds degrees in electrical engineering and aviation. His primary research interest is leadership in high-turnover organizations.

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