

Was Blind But Now I See!
John 9:6-12

As we look at this passage tonight we have been looking at the discussion of Jesus with the disciples about this blind man and who ultimately is responsible for his blindness and why this occurred. We have seen that God is the ultimate cause of all things, and that his blindness was that the works of God might be manifest or seen. It is the same thing when we go through trials and suffering. The works of God are manifested through our lives. Others see our hope in Jesus Christ.

Now we come to the miracle itself. And remember the reason why this gospel was written. John 20:30-31 says, **“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”** Notice that there were many others signs or miracles. But John selects just seven miracles. This is the sixth. They are the turning of water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. And then there was the healing of the noble man’s son, the healing of paralytic, the feeding of the five thousand, and Jesus walking on water. Then we have the sixth right here, and the final sign is the raising of Lazarus from the dead. And all of these are carefully chosen not just as a demonstration of Jesus’ power but they give a message of who Jesus is.

And so it is with this miracle. Look at verse 1 again, **“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.”** Notice as they were going out of the Temple, through the gate of Jerusalem that they passed by this man who was born blind. There is no indication that he even prays to God looking for sight that he never had. He would not even know that Jesus was there. He would have been seated with his legs crossed hoping people would throw coins in his lap. That is what his life consisted of. I do find it interesting that he was not looking for a healing for a couple of reasons. One is that this goes against so much of the miracle crusades that you see going on where people are looking for a miracle. And the so-called healer says that you have to believe and have faith that Jesus can heal. This man is not looking for a healing. He is not even aware that Jesus is present.

But the other reason why it is significant is that it pictures us. We realize that we were in blindness, and in our blindness we didn't even know that the Saviour was near, and didn't even recognize our need. And we were not even looking for sight. We were not looking for a Saviour and Lord. We were just continuing on our way. We like this man would not even know the full value of seeing because we had never seen before. Since we could not see the value of seeing we would not have prayed for Christ in our lives. If we were ever going to come to Jesus someone else would have to act on us. And that someone was Jesus himself. Jesus found us, and he gave us sight, and we saw him and our need, and our lives have never been the same again. And this is why this miracle is selected: it is to show us the truth of what God can do. It shows our need and how that need is met in Christ. Also, maybe you are hear tonight and you are not looking for a Saviour or Lord. You are just continuing on with you life and truly not recognizing your need. Maybe through this text, Jesus Christ is finding you. He is opening your eyes to see him and your need of a Saviour from your sin. Just like this

man you cannot save yourself. Only Jesus can do that. Jesus is truly the light of the world and he is just about to prove that to his disciples. And I want us to see a couple things tonight to hopefully see the glory of this miracle, and that is: I want us to see the miracle itself and then the result of that miracle.

1. We need to see the miracle of Jesus. Vv. 6-7.

We see here that Jesus is truly the Light of the world and able to make light shine in dark places. And again, it reminds us of what Jesus has done for people like us in 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, **“In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”** We were blind, but God did something amazing; something he could only do, and that is shine his light into our hearts to cause us to see. And here is the Creator God, able to give spiritual sight giving to this man physical sight. We can certainly see the parallels with our own lives.

Look at verse 6, **“Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud.”** Having said that he is the light of the world and that this man’s blindness was to show forth the works of God, he goes forth to perform this miracle. And it is kind of an odd miracle isn’t it? We realize that Jesus used his saliva to heal the deaf and mute man in Mark 7:33, and a little later in that same gospel heals a blind man in the same way in 8:23. But here Jesus takes the dry dirt of the earth and spits, makes clay and puts it on the man’s eyes. It is a strange way that Jesus heals this man. Some have speculated on the reason. Some have said this is something akin to the way that God made man from the dust of the ground. And Jesus is giving a message that he is the great Creator God.

But there really is no indication or explanation in the text that explains why Jesus did this. He could have just said “eyes be opened,” and at that command he would be able to see. Much like he command Lazarus to come forth from the tomb. We are just not told why Jesus did it this way. Some find this a bit too humiliating. I mean think of it. Here is a blind man in a terrible situation. And here Jesus spits on dirt to make clay to put on his eyes. Some are and would be repulsed by this whole scene. But isn’t that the same reason why so many never come to Christ? They find it too humiliating. To bow down and trust in the work of another, not to work or labour or prove your own worth, to admit your sin and your unworthiness before God is just too humbling. It goes against the major message of our day and age that you are a somebody. That you are special and you should have dignity and standing before God.

And for no other reason this is exactly what we see in the text not that Jesus would humble him just to humble him, but that the blind man might exercise faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is concerned not just for his physical suffering but more importantly, far more importantly, his spiritual condition. Look at verse 7, **“and said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.”** Now remember, there is nothing in this passage that

indicating that this man was looking for a miracle, but things change once Jesus comes and touches this man, and then he gives him a command, and that is to go wash in the pool of Siloam. Now we talked about this pool in chapter 7 when Israel was gathered before the Lord to celebrate what was known as the Feast of Tabernacles. And they would draw water from this pool every day, and bring it to the temple where it was poured out before the altar. And this was to celebrate a couple of things. One was the harvest but also the coming Messiah. And that is so important because look at John says here — he gives us the meaning of “Siloam.” It means “Sent.” And the meaning here is the one who would be sent from God. It is a divine picture of none other than Jesus Christ who said to all those who were gathered in Jerusalem on that last day of the feast in John 7:37, **“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.’”** Jesus is the Siloam. He is the fountain. He is the one who satisfies and gives life.

So Jesus muddies his eyes, and now he is commanded, and he has to go by faith to the pool of Siloam. He has to trust in Jesus Christ. William Hendrickson explains in his commentary, **“when this man is told to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, though it is certainly true that this must be taken in the most literal sense so that he was actually expected to wash his eyes in that literal pool, the deeper meaning is surely this: that for spiritual cleansing one must go to the true Siloam; i.e., to the One who was sent by the Father to save sinners.”**

Now think about how amazing the last part of verse 7 is, **“So he went and washed and came back seeing.”** Now how many examples are in Scripture of blind men receiving sight by spittle, dirt and washing in a particular fountain? Did he have faith in the symbols or the command itself? Or did he have faith in the person of the command? No doubt with all of Israel talking about Jesus and his signs and wonders and that this might be the Messiah, he trusts in Jesus. He is led to the fountain but he hopes willingly, and then washes just as he was instructed and he comes back seeing.

And we all who are Christians should be able to relate to the blind man that a simple Galilean preacher was really God in human flesh. He came and lived that perfect life, and now we are washed in the blood of the Lamb through simple faith in Christ. But someone had to turn on the light switch. Someone had to cause us to be born again, to give us spiritual sight. We can understand the words of John Newton, **“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found was blind but now I see.”** Also, the hymn, All I Have Is Christ, **“I once was lost in darkest night Yet thought I knew the way, The sin that promised joy and life Had led me to the grave, I had no hope that You would own A rebel to Your will, And if You had not loved me first I would refuse You still (Verse 2) But as I ran my hell-bound race Indifferent to the cost, You looked upon my helpless state And led me to the cross, And I beheld God’s love displayed You suffered in my place You bore the wrath reserved for me Now all I know is grace.”**

We need to celebrate the truth of our spiritual sight and illumination. There is no other explanation how the dead and the blind can now see and trust in Christ then him alone imparting life and sight. And maybe you want that life tonight. But maybe this seems either a bit too simple such as washing in the fountain for sight, or a bit too strange as all that Jesus said. Listen to what Mark Johnson writes about this episode, **“It**

illustrates for us the way that the instruction of the gospel to come to Jesus Christ by faith for our salvation which to many may seem just as bizarre as the instruction Jesus gave to the blind man will also become the vehicle for restoration of life. **The gospel requires a response to the command of Christ, just as the healing in this instance required obedience to his words. The gospel tells us to go to Christ for salvation, and so to Christ we must go.**" Humble your heart. Realize your need, and salvation is simply by trusting in Jesus for forgiveness of sins. Come to him.

And with any miracle there is a result or outcome of that miracle.

2. We need to see the result of the miracle. Vv. 8-12.

I can remember the illustration that has been told by a couple of different people, about the man who was giving an excuse of why he was late for a lunch appointment. He explained to the person sitting opposite to him, that he was coming but as he crossed the street a Mack Truck hit him, and therefore that is why he was late. And it is easy to see that was a lie because if a Mack truck hit you while crossing the road your whole life and appearance would be different. You would certainly look different. Well, it is the same when we come to the Saviour Jesus Christ, who is none other than God in human flesh. When we meet Christ our whole life is changed, and this change is easy to see. When God gives us new life and we have faith in Christ then our lives can and will never be the same again. There will be marks of meeting and knowing him all over our lives.

And this is what you see in the passage before us. Look at verse 8-9, **"The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'It is he.' Others said, 'No, but he is like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.'"** You can imagine their struggle to really relate that this is the man that they saw all their lives begging. He probably was a fixture at the gate of Jerusalem day in and day out. Many times they would even pass by and not even notice him, but now that he is seeing and walking and functioning they take notice of him. A.W. Pink relates this to our salvation and the change that comes over us. He says, **"When a genuine work of grace has been wrought in a soul it is impossible to conceal it from neighbours and acquaintances. At first they will talk among themselves and discuss with a good deal of curiosity and speculation what has happened. The unsaved are always sceptical of God's miracles. When one of their fellows is saved, they cannot deny that a radical change has taken place, though the nature of it they are completely at a loss to explain. They know not the manifestation of Christ in the outward life of a quickened soul is due to Christ now indwelling within. Yet, even the unbelieving world is compelled to take note and indirectly acknowledge that regeneration is a real thing."** Wow, isn't he right? If you have come out of darkness into the marvellous light of Christ especially in your adult life, you had all these questions come about you.

But, I also like the way that this describes our new life in Jesus. Because look at verse 9 again, **"Some said, 'It is he.' Others said, 'No, but he is like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.'"** Some said it is not him, and he said it is me. Isn't that the experience of faith in Christ? We are the same person but radically different. It is as Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new**

creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." We are a new creation in Jesus Christ, so what comes out of us is entirely different than before. This is why it is so puzzling when people look at your life. You are the same person but you are a new creation in Christ Jesus. And again, this cannot help but be seen in our lives.

So now convinced that it is him, they ask the natural question, **"So they said to him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?'"** They have been talking and discussing among themselves, but now they address the man for the first time. And isn't this the same thing that we experience? People see a radical joy and desire to follow God. Old habits and old ways of living and even responding are now replaced by new ones. And the natural question comes: how did this take place? What happen to you? And it is amazing because the questions that are usually asked at first are polite but because this world hates the light of God and Jesus is that light, they will become more hostile.

But there is no time lag here in being a witness of Jesus Christ. There is no courses that this man has to go through in order to point others to Christ. And when others are opposed and start to ask us questions that really does show the validity of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus says in Luke 12:8, **"And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God."** And also, notice the question: it's how were your eyes opened? And not who opened them. People are curious but they do not want to hear about Jesus Christ.

Now look at verse 11, **"He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight."** I love this testimony because it is so simple isn't it? He doesn't speculate on what might have happened but just gives what he knows. And his testimony is not centred on the how but the who. He doesn't just say well there was mud on my eyes and I washed it off. He would have known of all the talk about Jesus, and it would have been very dangerous to mention his name or any kind of allegiance. But he does. Even though he has not even seen the man Jesus, because now he is gone from the scene. And look at what happened to him, "received my sight." We sing about that truth in the hymn "At the Cross." The refrain goes, **"At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the Light And the burden of my heart rolled away, rolled away It was there by Faith, I received my sight And now I am happy all the day."** There really is a new joy even in the midst of the opposition.

Then we read in verse 12, **"They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.'" Remember at the end of chapter 8 they were seeking to stone him but Jesus passed through their midst. And he is not going to stay here in their midst. His time had not yet come but was on the horizon. Because of all the rising hatred against Jesus the people who had gathered around this man instead of celebrating and truly wanting to find Jesus, will take this man to the Pharisees - none other than the enemies of Christ. And Jesus does not appear again until we get down to verse 35 where Jesus will seek out this man again to minister to him.**

But as we think of all the trials and pitfalls and opposition that arise for us as believers. We still celebrate and cannot help but celebrate the truth that I was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see. Having spiritual eyes and trusting Christ our lives will never be the same again, and all the people of God say Amen to that.