

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Jesus Opens Blind Eyes

Scripture: John 9:1-12

Code: 1525

Chapter 9 of John this morning, we want to look at the first 12 verses. We're continuing in our study in John's gospel and as we come to chapter 9 we are well aware of what's happening in the life of Christ. You that have been with us in our study of John, you know just exactly what's going on. Christ is presenting Himself as God in human flesh. He's presenting Himself as the Messiah, the Savior of the world, God incarnate. And this is the burden of John's message. This is what John the apostle is doing in this whole gospel. He is presenting the deity of Jesus Christ. On every page, it is Christ is God, Christ is God, Christ is God, Christ is God, relentlessly, tirelessly, constantly.

And so, as we come to chapter 9, we come to a very significant miracle in the life of Christ. And John is very, very careful to use these miracles in his gospel because they designate the deity of Christ. It is God who does miracles. And Christ performing these miracles finds in these miracles verification for His claims. And John is careful to put down the miracles, and then the dialogue and the discourse that followed those miracles in which Jesus makes His claims to be deity on the basis of His ability to do miracles.

Now as we come to chapter 9 of John, we come to a very strange and yet very interesting passage. It is the healing of a blind beggar. Now, healing is a fascinating and important subject to us today. From the time that you're born into this world, the process of decay begins and you zero in, as Hardy says, on boxing day, which is the day you meet the pine box. And the whole process is a process of decay.

Death sets in and begins to carry itself step by step, step by step, into its total expression when we go out of existence in terms of our physical bodies. Healing occupies, therefore, much of our concern, because in life we do everything we can to keep this dying, decaying body alive and functioning well.

Healing is an important thing in religion. There are many so-called healers. Healing is an important part of our prayer life. We have vast hospitals, and doctors, and medical schools, and preparations working in the area of healing, to try to stop the process or slow it down, or alter it, the process of decay.

Now I am not a doctor, obviously, but there are some observations that I would like to make initially about healing and then to look at this account of Jesus healing the blind man. I feel there are four types of healing, basically. First of all, there is natural healing, and that's where the body rebuilds itself. Your body is made so that it responds to certain things by just the very virtue of its own

process. Your body seeks to throw off an intruder. Your body seeks to compensate for an injury. Your body fights disease and decay by itself. It struggles to recover from an injury. And all of that is the natural kind of healing. And it takes time.

But there's another type of healing when the natural is not sufficient, and that is medical healing. Doctors and nurses train, and they work, and they have developed tools, and devices, and techniques, and drugs, and various other things in order to aid people medically. By giving them certain drugs or by operating on them in certain surgical methods, to transplant their organs, or to bring about some repair of a damaged part, or whatever it may be, medical healing is a very, very important part of our world.

Thirdly, there's another area of healing, and that I call the problem of mental stress that causes disease. This is the area in which the faith healer finds his willing subjects, the idea of psychosomatic illness.

Some years back, the Mayo Clinic had felt statistically that 80 to 85 percent of all of their patients were ill either in reality or artificially because of mental stress. A few years back, there was an interesting article that described the work of a leading authority on the effect of mental stress on illness, and the title of the article was this, "Is stress the cause of all disease?" Interesting title. "At the beginning of the century," says Dr. McMillan, "bacteria was considered to be the center of attention. In the years today, mental stress," says McMillan, "has replaced bacteria."

And we ask ourselves, "How is it that that can happen? How can certain emotions change the actual functions of the body causing things like strokes, blindness, toxic goiters, and fatal clots in the heart, bleeding ulcers in the intestinal tract, even gangrene, kidney diseases, et cetera, et cetera, heart diseases?" All of these things can be directly or indirectly attributed very often to stress, emotional and mental problems.

Dr. O. Spurgeon English, medical doctor, published an excellent illustrated book describing how that mental stress in the emotional center of the brain can cause debilitating and even fatal illnesses throughout the body. And he demonstrates it by a series of diagrams, the first one being the drawing of a mental center, or an emotional center - whatever you want to call it in a man's brain - sending out nerve fibers to every area of the body. And because of the intricate nerve connections, it becomes understandable that any turmoil in the emotional center can send out impulses which can cause anything to happen at the other end. And the emotional center can send out these wide-spread changes which can produce many things. For example, there can be a change in the flow of blood to an organ, which can cause problems. There can be an effect upon the secretions of certain glands because of emotional stress. There can be the changing of tension in muscles because of emotional stress bringing about certain problems.

And so, it's very simple. Many people are ill just because they are under tremendous emotional stress. It may be neurotic. It may not be to that extent defined psychiatrically. It may be some emotional problem they're in. It may be some pressure that's getting to them. And it is to these folks that psychiatrists lend their time and also, "faith healers."

The whole business of faith healing is wrapped up in this kind of illness. And if you notice the faith healer type of person, they are always authoritative. They are always dynamic. They are always aggressive. They are always very commanding and their presence is very, very convincing. And in many cases, that's exactly what psychosomatically ill people need to hear and that is "you're well" from an authoritative source. And they can release these people from the mental stress that often causes symptoms when there is no disease or even can cause a disease itself.

Hypnotism is involved in it, as well. I remember the story in Atlanta about a young boy who had been paralyzed. And his legs were in braces, and he went to this healer whose name I will not mention. And the healer went through the dramatics, and put his hands on his head, and said whatever they say, and told him he was healed. And the emotion of the thing was so overwhelming that the parents took the braces off the child's legs and he walked down off the platform. Within two weeks gangrene had set into his legs, and it was only because of some careful medical attention immediately that he didn't lose both of them at the hip.

I might add this. I was studying this when I was in college because I wanted to understand what was going on, and I began to investigate, and I found out that most of these healing situations have a card system. If you have an illness which is not visible, you receive a white card, and that means you get into the line, the healing line. If you happen to be missing a leg, you get a blue card, which means you go to a prayer meeting, and you are not brought into the visible line because they have not been as adept at providing limbs where there were no limbs as they have been at curing certain diseases that belong to a psychological nature.

Then there's a fourth area of healing. The fourth area of healing is the divine miraculous. This is the area of healing where God is directly, and totally, and only involved, where there is no possibility of a natural process, where there is no indication that the orientation is psychological, and where there is no medical attention given particularly, but where there is a divine supernatural activity of God upon an organ, or a disease, or whatever it may be, so that that thing becomes righted and is in full health. Miraculous divine supernatural healing.

Now that is exactly what Jesus Christ came into this world and did. He performed miracle healings. But you see, that's no problem for Him because He's God, and the very nature of God demands that He be supernatural. And you see, a miracle is no big thing if you happen to be God. All it is is injecting yourself into human history, altering or violating the natural course of human law, to effect a

certain result, and then moving right back out again.

For example, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Lazarus went right back and lived a normal life, and ultimately later on died. The miracle happened in a point of time, and then everything went back to normal. God's Word is a book of miracles, because God by very definition of who He is, is a God of miracles. For the supernatural God to invade human history and act on it is no problem. That's what a miracle is.

And if you believe in any kind of God at all, you must believe in a miracle because that's merely God invading human history. And the Old Testament is a story of miracles. The Bible is the book of miracles. There are miracles all through the Bible because God is acting in human history.

The German rationalists thought you had to get rid of the miracles in the Bible. So Groff, and Wellhausen, and Bauer, and some of these other Germans decided that they'll rip all of the miracles out of the Bible, and they did that under the title of German rationalism. One of them came up with the fact that that left 26 inspired verses.

But some of the other theologians came along and said, "Fellas, you've really blown it because if you've robbed the miracles out of the Scriptures, if you've taken the miracles out of existence, then you have postulated the fact that there's no God, and you're atheists. Because if there is a God, there must be a miracle, for God must have invaded this world at some point."

And so the Bible is a book of miracles, and thus we know Jesus is a worker of miracles for He's God in flesh, right? Jesus is a miracle worker. And the miraculous healings that He did only corroborate His claims to deity. He said, "I'm God," and then He raised dead people to prove it, including Himself. And so the climactic proof of deity is the miraculous creative power to do the supernatural, to alter the unalterable, to change and violate the natural course of history and of the laws of nature.

And so, when Jesus heals this man here - and now I want you to watch this - it is not a natural process healing. It is not a medical healing. It is not a psycho-therapeutic healing. It is a miracle, pure and simple divine action upon two blind eyes, instantaneous recreation of functioning eyeballs, and all that goes along with it.

And when the critics used to say, "Well, you know how Jesus worked. He kind of got in on some natural healing processes that were going on, and they gave Him the credit." And some others say, "Well, of course, Jesus knew a lot about, you know, medical things." And somebody else - and this is kind of common - "Jesus was a master hypnotist and just like the faith healers today, He made people think they were well."

When you come to this miracle, you come to something very interesting, very interesting. This cannot be a natural healing. You know why? This man was born blind. He had no power to recover. There was no process to change it. He was born blind. Then it cannot be a medical healing, because nobody knew how to transplant an eye or to do surgery on this man. And it cannot be a psychological healing, since no stress caused the problem. It must be miraculous.

And let me add this. This is the only miracle in the gospels where Jesus is recorded to have healed a congenitally ill person. That is, it's the only case of somebody born with a disease that Jesus healed. And I believe John makes a key thing out of this to show so there's no possibility of criticism that Christ had absolute and total divine miracle power to do things without the natural processes, without any medical assistance, without any psychological dramatics, pure creative healing. And so He heals a man born blind, He gives him sight.

Now you'd think that the people would say, "Oh, that settles it. This is the Christ. I mean, how could we doubt it? I mean, it's got to be Him." But they didn't. They were so locked in their ignorant unbelief that Jesus begins to abandon them starting in chapter 9. And now you have that tragic account of what Paul mentions in Romans 1 when he says God looked at these people who had perverted what they knew of God. And three times Paul says this, "God gave them up, God gave them up, God gave them over to a reprobate - " what? " - mind."

And here you have it right here, Jesus Christ just backs off and says, "Okay. That's all." Claim, after claim, after claim, He stayed there confronting them till they picked up stones to kill Him at the end of chapter 8. And He says, "That's it."

After this miracle, a renewed, hating, antagonistic people come after Jesus again. And Jesus abandons them and begins to gather a little flock of believers, and nourish them, and prepare them for His departure in a few months. This is a real crux in the gospel of John. He moves away from the mass of Israel and the unbelieving Jewish leaders. And it's sad. It really is sad.

Now as we come to chapter 9, the whole chapter deals with this story but we'll consider only the first 12 verses. And they're very simple. You understand the story by merely reading them. But let's look at four aspects of this divine healing. You have a little outline in your bulletin. You might want to follow and jot a note down or two.

There are four aspects of this healing: The problem, that is what precipitated the healing; the purpose, why the man was blind to begin with; the power, how it happened that he was healed; and the perplexity, the result to the people around who saw the healing. The problem, the power, the perplexity.

First of all, notice the problem. We meet it in verse 1. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth." Now Jesus has just left the temple - going back to 8:59, "They took up stones to cast at Him: but Jesus hid Himself, went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, so passed by. And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man."

Now Jesus has just really been in just a toe-to-toe confrontation with the Jewish leaders. They have become so incensed and so infuriated at Him that they have grabbed the nearest stones - and, of course, at that time there was construction going on in the temple and probably had some available stones - and they were ready to throw them at Christ's head to kill Him, and He began to pass out of their midst. And as He passed out of the temple, He met a man. He saw a man. Not just an ordinary man, but a blind man, a blind man, who very undoubtedly was there for the purpose of begging, a blind beggar.

There's a beautiful parallel to this blind man in Acts chapter 3, where you have the man who was congenitally paralyzed from his birth, and Peter and John confronted him when he was begging at the temple gate called "Beautiful." And Peter and John healed him in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Always the power is divine. Both of them were beggars. Both of them were at the temple.

It must have been the place to beg, and I imagine it was a good place. If you wanted to beg, you'd probably find the best receptivity at the temple. You say, "Why?" Well, because devout people went there. You know, the good people went to the temple, the people who might be disposed to be giving away something.

Then I think, too, that the people were conscious of sin when they went to the temple, coming to make sacrifice for sin, and may have felt a little bit more like being charitable to somebody figuring, "Maybe, you know, this will kind of pacify my conscience."

Then it also is true that people came to the temple to do deeds of kindness, and to do deeds of charity, and so the ones who needed those deeds would be there. And the temple was crowded, and it would be a good place to have a lot of people, and so the odds were better that you'd get something. And I think you'd probably be pretty protected from mugging, with all of the religious leaders all around you there. And so the beggars were there at the temple, very common.

"And as Jesus passed by, He sees this particular blind man." And then one of the greatest miracles in all of the Scriptures happens. He heals him. And that's only the beginning. Because after healing his eyesight, He heals his soul. We shall see that in weeks to come. But I want you to see something beautiful here.

You know that blind man couldn't have seen Jesus. No way, couldn't see Him. He wouldn't have known if Jesus had walked right by him. Wouldn't have had any idea about it. But sovereign grace

isn't like that. Sovereign grace dominates this whole miracle. It isn't this man running to Jesus saying, "Oh, oh, oh. Heal me, heal me." No. Jesus saw him. And see that's the way sovereign grace is, isn't it? It's Christ seeking us. We could not see Him, except He saw us. We are blind. We're absolutely blind. We have no capacity to see God. We have no capacity to see Jesus Christ. We are incapacitated. We are stone blind, spiritually speaking. We can't see.

Second Corinthians chapter 4, Paul says, "the God of this age has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine unto them." And then Paul says, "But we preach Jesus;" who comes and opens blind eyes.

You see, the blind man can't find anything. He couldn't recognize Jesus if Jesus was standing in front - he has no capacity. And so it is with the sinner. So it is with the man apart from God. He has no capacity to see God. He has no capacity to see Jesus Christ. He has no ability to recognize Him if He's right in front of him.

And you know, I think this story is as good an illustration of sin as there is anywhere in the New Testament. Because it's that character of blindness that makes total incapacity to see that so aptly describes spiritual blindness. We cannot recognize God. We cannot recognize truth. We cannot recognize Christ. We are blind to spiritual reality.

The Bible makes an issue out of blindness, both physical and spiritual. In fact, of all the kinds of miracles that Jesus did, once in the Bible He healed a deaf and dumb, once He healed a person with a fever, once He healed somebody with - in the gospels - once He healed somebody with the palsy. I think two times He healed groups of lepers, three times He dealt with raising the dead, but five times Jesus, by His power, healed blind people.

And blindness has always been a picture of spiritual darkness. And just like this man who was at the mercy of Christ who saw him, so the sinner is at the mercy of Jesus Christ who comes over and lovingly and graciously says, "I'll touch your eyes and make you see."

We did not seek Him. He sought us. We had no capacity to even behold His glory. He had to reveal it to us by His own touch. That's how grace works. Lost man, blind, sees no God, sees no Christ, sees no truth, sees no love, sees no anything. And Jesus comes along and looks at that blind man with compassion in His heart, with love in His heart, comes over, offers grace and spiritual life and light to that man, and that's sovereign grace. He must give sight, for we could not see Him in our sinfulness. Sin is a blinding thing, a blinding thing.

So we see the problem, a blind man. You know, it's kind of beautiful thought, too, that Jesus had time for this blind man, isn't it? Do you get the circumstance? He's running for His life, Jesus is. Running to get away from being stoned. But He's never too busy to stop, to gather up a blind sinner and bring

him along.

You know, I often thought about my own life. If it was myself, and I was running away from being stoned, I don't really think I'd stop to share the truth with anybody. I think I'd be hightailing it so fast there'd be a cloud of smoke. Not Jesus. He was threatened with His life, but He had time to stop and give sight to a blind man. And you know what? He just kept on going. But the blind man finally found Him again. And He gave sight to his soul.

You know, it reminds me of Jesus on the cross. Jesus was dying on the cross, bearing the sins of the world, the whole sins of the world, on the sinless Son of God. Talk about problems. Talk about the guilt, the shame. And so unoccupied with His own problems that He was hanging there on a cross, gathering into His arms a dying thief to carry along to paradise with Him that same day. That's always the way Jesus is, isn't it? Always concerned about the one who needs - and so the problem.

Verse 2, the purpose. And this is an interesting, interesting thing. "And His disciples asked Him, saying - " and this is the first time the disciples are mentioned, incidentally, in this period of time in Jerusalem, but John isn't so concerned with the disciples. He's presenting Christ and only the disciples incidentally. But "His disciples asked Him saying, Master, who did sin? This man or his parents that he was born blind?"

You say, "What kind of question is that? You mean they assumed that whenever there was suffering, or whenever there was illness, somebody's sin made it happen?" That's exactly right. The rabbis taught that all suffering was directly attributed to acts of sin, either by the individual or by his parents. And so the disciples' question is a question that dominated Jewish thought. And whenever anybody got sick, it was automatically associated with sin.

And that can get a little touchy, but you can imagine going around and saying, "Boy, I haven't been feeling well." "Aha." You see? But that was the way it was. They associated suffering with sin. And so the disciples' questions were natural question. Who was it? "Did he sin or did his parents sin?" That's a profound question because a man was born blind, you see? Born blind.

And so the disciples must be thinking this, listen, "If his parents sinned, what a dirty trick. He had nothing to do with it, and look what happens to him." As if to say, "Lord, if his parents sinned and he got this as a result of his parents sin, that's not really fair, poor fella."

On the other hand, if it was his sin that did it, how come he was born blind? You know how the Jews answered that? The Jews had a doctrine of prenatal sin. Try that one on for size. They had a doctrine of prenatal sin. They believed - some of the rabbis taught this - that a child could sin in the womb and then pay the penalty all its life for prenatal sin.

You say, "Where did they get that?" They just made it up, because it fitted the logic of their process. If you're going to have sin be the cause of disease, and it perhaps wasn't the parents' sin if you've got a pair of godly, godly parents, what else are you going to say except you had this - it was a bad, bad embryo?

And so, this is what they felt. And incidentally, there's an interesting dialogue that I discovered that kind of talked about this, but this was their viewpoint. They had the strange idea that sin was absolutely always connected to suffering.

Now it's interesting and I want to say some more about that specific aspect in a minute, but, you know, the question is interesting as it's formed. Look at it. "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Profound question. Lord, explain to us this thing about children paying for the sins of their parents or this thing about prenatal sin, or what's going on here?

Now medically there could have been an answer. This is purely from a medical standpoint. Who sinned? His parents or himself that he was born blind? Medically, the answer would most likely have been his parents. You say, "What do you mean by that?" Just this, gonorrhea, the venereal disease, is in the mother, the most common cause of total blindness in the next generation. When the mother is infected with gonorrhea, the eyes of the baby can become infected even as it passes through the birth canal. This has been a common disease around the world. The infection of gonorrhea of newborn babies is very severe. It scars their eyes so that they cannot see. For example, in Africa and in the East, there are multiplied thousands of blind babies that are born, most of them blinded by gonorrhea.

In our country, we don't see blind beggars. For the most part, they are tapping their way down some black corridor of some institution. Or because we have developed medical techniques to assist in the birth of a child in such a situation, because we have cures for these venereal diseases with the invention of penicillin and other things, we don't have that problem.

And not many years ago, according to a medical book that I was reading, 90 percent of all of the blindness in our institutions in America was a result of gonorrhea. Today, of course in countries where there is no silver nitrate and where they can't prevent these things, there's a colossal number of blind babies born, hundreds of thousands of children have paid for the sins of their parents, haven't they, in a purely medical standpoint.

So, from a medical perspective, the question was well asked. And those people knew about these kind of diseases. They must have seen these people with venereal disease, the living dead walking around all the time, because they had no cures for things like that.

But beyond the medical was the spiritual question, the theological question. They were really asking a profound theological question. They were saying, "Who theologically is responsible for this punishment? Was it the parents' sin that brought it on, or was it prenatal activity of this person?"

Well, they had a strange idea. There was an article that I read that recorded some Jewish history. And in it they had a kind of a conversation between Antoninus, whoever he may be, and Rabbi Judah, another just rabbi. And Antoninus asks this - and I'm quoting from this conversation. "From what time, Judah, does the evil influence bear sway over a man?" Rabbi Judah said, "From the embryo." Antoninus objected and said, "I disagree." And he made Judah admit that if that were so, the child would kick in the womb and break out.

But Judah prevailed and discovered Genesis 4:7, which says, "Sin lieth at the door." And together they agreed that that referred to the door of the womb. That's what they said, and that is idiocy, of course. But nevertheless, it precipitated this teaching of prenatal sin.

There was also another view. The Greeks felt that a soul existed before it entered a body. And some Jews had absorbed the Greek philosophy that the soul could sin, and then entering the body, pay the consequences of sinning when it was a soul. So the problem of prenatal sin was there. And, of course, it's so ridiculous it doesn't even bear consideration any further than that.

But the key teaching among the Jews was that the parents would sin, and the children would pay the consequences. And they got it out of Exodus 20:5 - you might write it down. You can refer to it later. But Exodus 20:5 says this. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."

Now may I add very hastily that verse is in a general sense, not specific. He is not saying, "When daddy sins, junior gets it." He is saying when the fathers - plural - sin the generations - plural - pay. What do you mean? When Israel goes into idolatry and God punishes Israel by oppression, by scattering them, it's not only that generation that gets punished but it's the rest of the generations that follow, isn't that so?

He is talking about national punishment, that when Israel's ancestors sinned, the generations after - how about that? That's of course true. From 70 A.D. when they were thrown out of their land, up until 1948, all those generations paid the consequences of the sins of their forefathers.

Oh, that's so true, but it's national. It's not talking about particular sin of the father, and the son gets punished. God doesn't operate like that, but Israel thought He did.

Let me show you how Ezekiel dealt with that problem. Ezekiel chapter 18. They were teaching this thing that the children were going to suffer for the parents' sins. They had misread Exodus 20, and Ezekiel by the Word of the Lord, wants to set them straight. So in the 18th chapter of Ezekiel, he does. "The Word of the Lord - " Ezekiel 18:1 " - came unto me again saying, - " listen to this " - What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying - " what are you doing saying this " - the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" That's a good proverb.

You know, when you eat a sour grape, gives you that thing - well, that's what they're saying. You eat the sour grape and the children go like this. Very vivid, very vivid. God says, "What are you doing teaching that the father sins and his son or daughter pays? You've misread the point."

"As I live - " verse 3 " - saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion anymore to use this proverb in Israel." Now look at verse 20 - and all this in between is about it, tremendous chapter - look at verse 20 just quickly. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of - " what? " - of the father - " no " - neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Individual responsibility before God.

And so the question that they asked indicates the ignorance of Ezekiel 18 at least, and that they had been subject to the teaching of the rabbis that children paid for parents' sins. That's not so, not so at all.

And Jesus says that, in effect, in verse 3. And it's an important statement that He makes in verse 3. He says this, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents." You see, all suffering is not a result of sin, necessarily. It doesn't have to be. But this man is blind "that the works of God should be made - " what? " - manifest in him." He's not blind because of sin. This man is a prepared vessel. He is a miracle waiting to happen.

Kind of exciting, isn't it? He was born blind for one reason, so God's glory could be seen in this healing by Jesus Christ. That's why He was born blind. For the glory of God sometimes is why suffering comes. You know, Job's friends tried to tell him that the reason he was having such problems was because he was such a lousy person, such a sinner. And Job couldn't figure it out. But it was all for God's glory. Sin had nothing to do with it and doesn't here.

Even affliction can be for the glory of God. All these things can happen for the glory of God, and this was a prepared vessel, a miracle waiting to happen. This was a blind beggar sitting at a gate waiting for the time planned in eternity past that Jesus would pass by and manifest His glory by touching his eyes so he could see. Fantastic truth.

I love it as he moves to verse 4, Jesus says this, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." You know what He's saying? In effect, He's saying, "Listen, I'm not going to get into a theological discussion on sin and suffering. Let's get at it and heal this man." He says, "This man didn't sin, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be manifest in him."

And you can imagine the disciples were going to say, "Lord, I have a question. Well, how does this work?" But He says, "Now, let's get to work. Theological dialogue has its place, but its place is never to stop the work."

I want you to notice something in verse 4. Verse 4 starts with the word, "I must work," the words, "I must work." That's the reading from the Textus Receptus, which is the basic source for the King James. Since that time, we have discovered many newer manuscripts. The newer ones remove the word "I" and the word "we" is there and I like that. "We must work the works of Him that sent Me." You know what that does? That's Jesus identifying Himself with us in a common labor, I like that. I like that. He says to His disciples "Disciples, we must work."

You say, "Well, is this a physical thing? I mean, we've got to get going while it's daylight because when the night comes the blind man won't even know he got his sight back?" Oh, I don't think that's the point. He wouldn't be able to appreciate fully his sight until the dawn. That's not the point. The point is this. Life and death, that's the point. Jesus is saying, "We don't have much time. It's daylight but night is coming when we can't work." And Jesus knew it was only a matter of months and He'd be dead, just a matter of months.

And Jesus is saying, "Let's work together, hand in hand the works of God while we have our life to do it." That's one of the greatest texts. Listen, Paul told the Ephesians in chapter 5:16, he said this, "Redeeming the time because the days are evil." Get at it, get at it.

Listen, there's a spiritual implication here. We only have our lifetime to work, that's all we have and what we do for Him we do now or we don't do. Listen, my Christian friend, let me put it as simply as I can. Clean your life up. Get the garbage out of your life. Shape it up. Get the sin out, the worldliness, the compromise. Stop wasting your time flirting around with the world. There's no place in this Christian life for the things of the world.

And Jesus Christ says it today, "Get busy and take hands with Me and work, for it's day and night's coming, and it's coming fast. So many Christians are so preoccupied with making money, and entertaining themselves, and exalting their ego, and doing the things they want to do, and others are so lazy and slothful in doing nothing, and Jesus is saying the same thing. He's saying, "Let's get together and do the works of God."

Listen, you haven't even begun to tap, and neither have I, what God can do through us. Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh - " where? "- in us." There is power there to do the unthinkable. And most of us piddle around doing nothing.

And Jesus comes along and says, "We must work. We must work." Put your hands in the hands of Jesus Christ and work, and let some of the stuff in the world fall off. Now is the time. Theological dialogue has its place. Let's not get into an argument. We've got a blind man here. Let's get him some sight.

I'm amazed at how many people in Christianity sit around talking about theology, how many pastors conferences where the pastors all sit around and talk about what's wrong with this pastor, and what's wrong with this evangelist, and what's wrong with this thing, and you want to get in there and say, "Get out of here, everybody, and do something." Sit around talking about doing nothing. Let's work. Let's get our hands in the hands of Jesus Christ. Let's get our lives matched up with Him and let's together do something. Let's not do our own works. Let's do whose works? God's works. You say, "Can I do God's works?" You better believe you can do them, in the strength of Jesus Christ.

Then verse 5, Because, says Jesus, "I'm the light of the world" just as long as I'm here, so while I'm here I've got to give the light out. He is still the light, but He is not in the purest sense in the world physically ministering, and He says, I've only got so much time. As long as I'm in the world I'm the light of the world and I've got to get at it. The Father put Me here to light this world, now let's go. You've got a man here who needs light, let's get at him.

I like that. Don't you like that compulsion of Jesus? If anybody could have sat back and depended on sovereignty, He could, right? Relax, guys, it's all in My control. No, let's work. Let's work. We've got a blind man. Let's give him light, see? Urgency was in Jesus Christ's attitude. And He was God, and He knew the end from the beginning, and He was in a hurry. And so He says, "I'm the light of the world as long as I'm here."

You know, He was light physically for this man, wasn't He? He was going to touch those eyes, those sightless eyes, those motionless eyes, and He was going to open them, and recreate their sight, and that blind man was about to behold the light of day. For the first time in his life He'd see the glory of the dawn. He could look at the sky, the sunset, the irresistible hills of Jerusalem and the surrounding country, and most of all, he could see the valleys, and the rivers, and the people that he loved. He was the light physically.

But, oh, far beyond that, Jesus was the light of his soul. Jesus was going to open his soul. And He did. Over in verse 38 He opened that man's soul. That man said to Him, "Lord - " what? " - I believe,"

and he fell down and worshiped Him. Listen, far more than the light of eyes, Jesus was the light of the soul. He's the only one that can turn the soul's lights on.

You know, this world is occupied by people with sightless souls, black souls who see nothing. And all of a sudden, Jesus Christ reaches in there. What does He have to do to that soul? Throw it away, in a sense. Second Corinthians says, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation." Got to do it all over, a seeing soul. And you know what happens when Christ turns on the lights in your soul? All of a sudden truth becomes recognizable, doesn't it? You know the truth. All of a sudden love is seen, peace is beheld, glory is fully expressed. God becomes visible in the sense of focus. Christ becomes real. The eye of faith sees, and understands, and the light dawns. And to this blind beggar He gave both: Physical sight and spiritual sight.

Why did He do it? What was the purpose? The purpose of it was for the glory of God. The same purpose for the man's blindness, to bring about the manifest works of God that God might receive the glory.

Thirdly, look at the power, and quickly let's see how Jesus did the miracle. And it's very simple. We'll just refer to it here. "When He had thus spoken - " and He hasn't said anything to this man who is just sitting there, probably a nervous, fidgety person wondering what is going on. "When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." He just made some clay right there on the ground, put it in His hands, and put it into the sockets of that man.

Well, you say, "Why did He do that?" And you wouldn't believe how many commentators spend pages after pages on why He did that. One commentator said He wanted to make use of the healing quality of saliva. Another commentator said He wanted to make him more blind than he already was. Another one said it was to symbolize that man was made from dirt. That's not pushing very hard. Somebody else said He wanted to create a delay so the crowd would scatter. What crowd? Somebody said He wanted to give the eyes time to heal. Since when does He need time? Somebody else says it symbolizes the mud-plastered eyes of unbelief. Perhaps there's a thought there.

You want to know why Jesus did it? Because He wanted to. And then He said to the blind man, verse 7, "Go - " and that in itself is a difficulty if you're blind, and undoubtedly a very strange sight, a blind man with mud on his eyes crossing the city of Jerusalem. "Go wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came - " what? " - seeing."

Again you have the simplicity of the miracles of Christ. You know, it just says he went, and washed, and came seeing. You don't hear, "And the angels sang, and heaven rattled, and the trumpets blew, and the earth shook, and Jesus said, 'See.' "

Listen. For the God who made the universe to create a couple of seeing eyes was nothing. He went, washed, came seeing. It's a small thing for the Christ who stood one day on the edge of heaven and said, "Universe, exist." And it did. And he came seeing.

Why did Jesus send him to Siloam? Oh, that I do know. Siloam was a little pool inside the southeast wall of the city. Hezekiah had set it up because they were afraid of siege. There was a spring called the Gihon Spring, or the Virgins' Fount, up on the temple mountain, the hill of the temple. Well, in order to assure water in the city in a siege, you know, they'd cut off all the water coming into the city, Hezekiah had built an aqueduct, a tunnel running the water from the spring up on the hill where the temple was right down into the pool of Siloam so they'd always have a water supply in the event of a siege. The Old Testament name for that pool was called "Shiloah," which now has been called Siloam in the Greek. "Shiloah" and it meant "Sent." And sure, from the temple hill, the water was sent, and this was the sent water.

Now watch this one, the temple hill was a place where God was represented, right? So naturally, Siloam represented that which was sent from God, representative of His blessings. And so Jesus is saying, "Go wash in Siloam, the water sent by God, that will cleanse your eyes."

You want to know something? And if a man wanted to see in his soul he'd have to go to the one true Siloam, the one true sent from God, who was none other than Jesus Christ. You see the beautiful symbolism in Siloam? Siloam bore the waters that came from the temple of God. Jesus was the living water, who also came from God. He is the perfect Siloam.

And so He tells the man to go wash in the pool of Siloam, and a beautiful symbolism it is. And when he went to wash in Siloam, a deeper meaning was there. The spiritual cleansing that one must have when he goes to the true Siloam, the true spring of water pouring forth from God, who is none other than Jesus Christ, the one sent from God. Those waters that flowed down from the temple hill, those waters that cascaded down into the pool of Siloam were regarded as symbolic of Messiah in Isaiah chapter 8. Even Isaiah makes that characteristic comment about these pools, that they symbolize Messiah flowing from God, and here He is, Jesus Christ.

One other time He identified Himself with Siloam, and that time was in John 7. Remember when He stood up on the last day of the feast of tabernacles and they were going through the ceremony? And they had scooped the water out of the pool of Siloam, and they were pouring the water over the altar, and just at the moment they were pouring the water while everyone was around, Jesus stood up and said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me." You know what He was saying there? He was saying that's Siloam water, I'm the true Siloam, the true sent one with the water of life. And so the symbolism of going to Siloam is beautiful.

And the man obeyed blindly, and went, and without any fanfare, he washed his eyes and opened them, and he saw. What's the first thing he saw? The water, probably. And then, can you imagine, as he looked up, I don't know what went on. He came seeing. Came where? He came to his home. Where was the first place he'd want to go? To see the people he loved. So he came home. And when he got there, notice the perplexity, and I'll just read it because it's so obvious. He comes running and he's seeing. And where's Jesus? Jesus is still hurrying away from the crowd that was going to stone Him.

And here he comes, and he comes home, and "the neighbours therefore, and they who before had seen him that was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?" What is he doing running around knowing where he's going? How is it that he can see? And even a little perplexity. Verse 9 sums it. "This is he." That's the guy. Others said, "Looks a lot like him." And he says, "I am he."

Can't you imagine what a joy it was to say that? "I'm he." And naturally, verse 10, they asked the obvious question, "Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?" And he doesn't go into a big theological thing and say the power of God came. He just says this, "Well - " verse 11 " - a man called Jesus made clay, anointed my eyes, said, Go wash in the pool of Siloam: I went, washed, and I saw."

He just gives them a little detailed - very brief - it's exactly what happened. He doesn't really know who Jesus is. He doesn't really know what's going on. All he knows is this man Jesus said, "Go," and when He said, "Go," I couldn't stop, I took off. The compelling power of Christ. Listen, when Jesus said to that man, "Go and wash," that man couldn't have held himself on the ground, and he went and washed. And he said, "The next thing I knew, I received my sight."

Well, of course, anybody that can do something like that has got to be popular. So verse 12, "Then said they unto him, Where is He? And he said, I know not." I know not. It wouldn't be long until he'd know. They'll meet again. They'll meet again. Jesus will find him. And He not only would touch his eyes, but He'll touch his sightless soul next time.

You say, "What does this teach us?" Oh, so many things, so many things. You know, it's interesting the perplexity, isn't it? Is the world perplexed because of your relationship to God? Are your neighbors perplexed? Do they say, "You can't be the same person. Are you the one?" And you have to say, "That's right. It's me?" Or is your Christianity so well concealed that they don't know any difference, anyway?

I like the idea that nobody recognized him. That's the way it ought to be when Jesus Christ touches your soul. You ought to be unrecognizable. The world ought to be in a state of mass confusion about what happened to you.

There are other lessons here. The lesson of are we working for Christ? What are we doing? What are we doing? It must grieve His heart when He's saying to us, "We must work. We must work." And He even says, "Pray. Pray that the Lord will find laborers to send into His harvest."

The main lesson is this. Have you met the true Siloam? Have you met this Christ? The true light who lights not only the eye, but the soul. Listen. He made your eyes. He lit them when you were born. That's right. You see because of Jesus Christ. All things were made by Him, without Him was not anything made. He made your eyes. He put the light in your eyes. And He wants to put the light in your soul.

The ever-sensitive Jesus is passing by today, passed by you. You didn't see Him, maybe. He saw you. Maybe He reached down and anointed your eyes, and in sovereign grace He said, "I'll give you sight if you'll obey My Word and go and wash." You see, that's the response of faith, isn't it? If Jesus has touched your eyes this morning, how did you respond? Are you saying, "Lord, I'll wash, I believe?" Did He touch your eyes? Do you see? If you don't, you can.

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