**Blind From Birth**

**Text: John 9:1-11**

What a horrible thing to be born blind… never seeing anything, ever. Colors would mean nothing, sunrises and sunsets never seen, only described.

In our tour group to Israel there was a man who was blind… He was not blind from birth; I think he was something like 8 years old when he lost his sight. Everything that we saw had to be described to him. But can you imagine trying to describe something that someone has never seen? How can you describe a picturesque mountain covered in green grass towering against a sunset? How can you describe the sun burnt orange of a sunset and the beautiful horizon in sets into?

In our story we have such a man. He was born without the ability to see. I don’t believe that it was a coincidence that Jesus runs across this man. Jesus calculated His steps very carefully, and everything He did was for a purpose. He was only “in the ministry” for something like 3 years so He had to “get to the point” when it came to winning the world.

Jesus’ purpose in running into this blind man was to emphasis that He is “the Light of the world”. Often times Jesus would use word pictures to describe Himself… Let me give you some examples of what I mean…

* When Jesus was sitting on Jacob’s well and talking to a Samaritan woman He painted the picture that He was “living water.”
* When Jesus fed the multitude with 5 small loaves of bread the word picture was that He indeed is “the Bread of Life.” (John 6:35)
* At the Feast of Tabernacles when they remembered the time when Moses struck the Rock in the wilderness and water broke forth and satisfied the Israelis, Jesus tells the people, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.” (John 7:37)
* Again at the Feast of Tabernacles they celebrated the pillar of fire that guided the Jews through the wilderness, Jesus tells them in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

Every miracle that Jesus did said something about who He is. John seems to keep with this last word picture found in John 8:12 and brings it into chapter 9 with the introduction of the blind man.

As this man, who was blind from birth receives his sight by the power of Christ… we too can receive spiritual sight and salvation. We were born blind, maybe not physically, but spiritually we were born without the ability to see spiritual things. That’s why Jesus says, “I am the Light of the world.” Only Jesus can make a blind man see… physically or spiritually.

\*\*\* Notice first of all that:

**1. Sin Has Brought Sorrow into This World**

Why is there such a thing as crib death? Why do aged men and women eventually breathe their last breath? Why are there diseases such as AIDS, cancer, heart defects or even the flu? It is all because of sin. When Adam and Eve sinned, when they disobeyed God, sickness and death moved in.

You may say, “if only our forefathers would have obeyed we wouldn’t be in this mess.” You need to quit blaming Adam and Eve for their sin because you’ve got enough of your own to worry with.

\*\*\* Notice the question that the disciples asked…

**a. Who Sinned?**

Look at verses 2-3 with me…

**John 9:2-3 ( KJV )****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.**

I find it interesting to note that the disciples were treating this blind man as if he were deaf as well. Apparently, in front of this man they point blank ask a question that was a little offensive. They assumed that sin was the cause of all suffering. They had good reason to think this way because back in chapter 5 with the healing of the paralytic man by the pool of Bethesda, sin was the cause. The disciples probably overheard Jesus tell the man this while in the Temple and now assume sin; (somebody’s sin) was responsible for this man’s blindness.

Many people believe that when a person gets sick that it is because of some dire sin in their life. They believe it is God’s punishment or judgment on one’s life. Job’s friends are good examples of what I mean. They thought for sure that Job had to have done something to deserve the troubles he was experiencing. Of course we know that was not the case at all.

Think about this; if sickness and pain are always the result of sin, what then do we believe when a baby is born with cerebral palsy, heart defects, retardation etc… etc…

The disciples thought if this man was born blind someone’s sin must have been the cause. So it had to be either the parents or the man himself that sinned. It was ridiculous, in my opinion to think that it could have been the man’s sin because he was BORN BLIND. So he would have had to sin while still in his mother’s womb. How could that be?

So Jesus puts an end to all speculation in verse 3…

**John 9:3 ( KJV )
3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.**

\*\*\* What a burden blindness must be…

* When he was a boy he couldn’t help his dad @ work – blind
* Couldn’t hammer a nail – blind
* Couldn’t go to market for meal or flour – blind

As burdensome this blindness must have been on the family they still loved him. (speculation of course)… but in my imagination I can’t help but wonder, did dad often blame himself for the disease of his son? Did mom believe she was the cause of her poor son living in darkness?

The Jews of Jesus’ day were of the mindset that all sickness and disease was caused by sin in one’s life. So obviously the parents must have believed that one of them must have caused it… And how about the people of the village they were from. Did any of them ever wonder what terrible secret sin one of them or both did to cause such misfortune?

Jesus set everyone straight. It was not because of his sin or his parents…

**“…but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”**

The Israelites had heard about the mighty works of God all their lives. In fact they were commanded to tell their children about them…

They heard of how:

* The death angel passed over them in Egypt
* The Red Sea was divided
* Moses struck a Rock in the wilderness and gave water to them there.
* Elijah calling fire out of the sky
* Elijah raising a woman’s dead son back to life
* Victory @ Jericho when the walls came tumbling down

They had heard of the works of God, but had never seen them with their own eyes… Now Jesus was revealing the mighty works of God as He walked through the land…

This man was born blind so that we might see the power of Christ to open dead eyes, and to open dead spiritual eyes too.

\*\*\* Because in essence…

**b. All have sinned**

**Isaiah 64:6 ( NKJV )****But we are all like an unclean *thing,*    And all our righteousnesses *are* like filthy rags…**

**Isaiah 53:6 ( NKJV )
All we like sheep have gone astray;    We have turned, every one, to his own way;    And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

**Romans 3:23 ( NKJV )****for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

\*\*\* Secondly, notice that Jesus gives us…

**2. A Lesson in Opportunity**

Have you ever heard the old adage, “opportunity knocks”?

Well, it only knocks for so long. Like the real estate market, years ago was a booming industry, but now it’s a buyer’s market. Opportunity knocked and those who answered the door got paid.

Please notice…

**a. Jesus’ short 3 year ministry**

Jesus had 3 short years to change the world and I would say that He did a great job of that seeing that history divided itself around His life… (BC-AD).

Everything that Jesus did focused on His goal… (Seeking and saving that which was lost).

Look at verses 3 and 4… Jesus said of His short ministry…

**John 9:4-5 ( KJV )****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.**

In three years time Jesus would have to convince the world that He is their long awaited Messiah and that He was the Son of God.

* Jesus did an amazing job of reaching His goal in 3 short years…
* Paul successfully preached the gospel all around the Mediterranean Sea in his short lifetime.
* Peter too, on the Day of Pentecost began his ministry with a bang, 3,000 souls won on that day alone.

\*\*\* It is no secret that…

**b. Our lives are but a vapor**

In fact James says this in James 4:14…

**James 4:14 ( NKJV )****whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.**

So, how much time do you and I have to spread the gospel? We have the opportunity right now to obey he great commission of Christ and go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15)

I’m 46 years old and I can remember, like it was yesterday being 24 and marrying the most beautiful woman in the world… 4 kids and 22 years have passed since that time and I’ve got say that I agree with James that life indeed is a vapor…

We have such little time to spread the gospel… So let’s work til Jesus comes and be found faithful to Him in all we do.

\*\*\* Notice thirdly,

**3. The Different means in Which Jesus Worked Miracles**

Have you ever heard the old saying… “There’s more than one way to skin a cat?” Well first of all I don’t know why anyone would want to skin a cat, but the meaning is… “There can be different means to reach a goal.”

Jesus did miracles in different ways…

* Told Peter to get their tax money out of a fishes mouth.
* Woman healed… issue of blood… touched the hem of His garmet.
* Centurion’s servant healed by the command of His word.
* Leper cleansed when Jesus touched him.

But the healing we have before us is an amazing display of the creative power of Christ.

\*\*\* Notice that…

**a. Jesus spat on the ground**

Look with me at verse 6…

**John 9:6 ( KJV )
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,**

The first verse that comes to mind when I read this verse is Genesis 2:7…

**Genesis 2:7 ( NKJV )****And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.**

Notice with me that when God created the universe He called everything else into existence, but when it came to man He was hands on. It shows me the great that God took to form us.

He formed our: noses, ears, arms, legs, and yes even our **EYES**!!!

Is it possible that when Jesus spat on the ground to make mud, that He was actually going back to the original materials with which He made man? Is it possible that He formed 2 new eyeballs for this poor blind fellow?

With God all things are possible.

* Walking on water
* Feeding a multitude with a sack lunch
* Healing a young man from some 20 miles away
* Turning normal, plain water into wine

And now making a new set of eyes for a man who was born blind.

If Christ could make physically blind eyes see… He can surely make spiritually blind eyes see. In other words Jesus can do what He wants, when He wants. Such as in creation… Colossians 1:16 says…

**Colossians 1:16 ( NKJV )****For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.**

God, in the beginning had the desire to create… in Genesis God said… “Let there be light, and there was light.”

Christ always has the power to create, but I want you to notice that it was not available to this man until he obeyed.

Look at verse 7 with me…

**John 9:7 ( KJV )
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.**

\*\*\* First notice that…

**a. Obedience is a must**

What do you think would have happened if this blind man would have said, “Lord, I think it would be easier for me to make my way over to a closer pool…? Water is water, right? WRONG!!!

This reminds me of a story found in 2 Kings chapter 5. It’s the story of a man named Naaman (Commander of the Syrian army) who had leprosy. He came to Israel from Syria desiring to be healed of this dreaded disease and is directed by the King of Israel (Jehoram) to go and see the prophet of God (Elisha).

Of course the great Naaman thinks that the prophet of God should have come out personally and called on his God, waved his hands around in some spiritual fashion and healed him of his leprosy.

It didn’t happen that way…

Listen to how it happened in 2 Kings 5:10-11…

**2 Kings 5:10-11 ( NKJV )****10. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and *you shall* be clean.”****11. But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, “Indeed, I said to myself, ‘He will surely come out *to me,* and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.’**

\*\*\* Listen to Naaman’s response to the prophet’s words…

**2 Kings 5:12 ( NKJV )*****Are* not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.**

Notice that as long as he was in disobedience he didn’t see the power of God working in his life.

His servants later come to him and talk some sense into him. He comes to obey the prophets word and look what happened…

**2 Kings 5:14 ( NKJV )
So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.**

Obedience moves the hand of God. Obedience is something that pleases the Lord. You have a book in your hand called a Bible. It was meant to be read and obeyed… Do you want to see the power of God moving in your life? Then “**trust and obey, for there’s no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey**.”

So, here we have an obedient blind man who does exactly what Jesus says and what is his reward?

Look at verse 7…

**“…and came back seeing.”**

\*\*\* Notice too,

**b. The difference the power of Christ can make in life**

Look with me to verses 8-9…

**John 9:8-9 ( KJV )****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*.**

His neighbors hardly recognized him. They knew he was blind, they knew he used to sit and beg. Maybe some of his neighbors had held out their arms to him to guide him somewhere. This couldn’t be the same man, they thought, could it?

So obvious was the change that some of his neighbors, (those closest to him) didn’t even recognize him. WOW!!!

\*\*\* Notice with me the change Jesus brings to…

**C. Spiritual eyes**

Look with me to a familiar passage found in 2 Corinthians 5:17…

**2 Corinthians 5:17 ( NKJV )
Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

Just like the blind in our story, millions have come to Christ so that their spiritual eyes could be opened…

NOW…

* They think about God most of the day
* He is real to them
* Heaven becomes a real place, a place they long for…
* The Word of God becomes a love letter from God that they cannot put down.

Friends, when Jesus opens spiritual blinded eyes there is a change that can be seen.

Steven Curtis Chapman sings a song entitled “What about the change.”

We’ve got Christian T-shirts, belt buckles, bumper stickers and bracelets but like Steven Curtis Chapman asks in his song… “What about the change, what about the difference that Christ makes in a life?”

Notice that our blind man’s neighbors had to ask…***“Is not this he who sat and begged?”***

When someone gets saved the world asks questions too…

* Is this not he who drank with us?
* Is this not he who did drugs with us?
* Is this not he who cursed like a sailor with us?
* Is this not he who used to beat his wife?
* Is this not he who hated church like we do?

When Jesus comes and opens blinded spiritual eyes there **IS** a change!!!

\*\*\* Notice in verse 9…

**John 9:9 ( KJV )
Some said, This is he: others *said*, He is like him…**

He had to convince them in that latter part of verse 9…

***“…but* he said, I am *he*.” (Vs. 9)**

The Bible says that if anyone is in Christ, “he is a new creation.”

Just like the new set of eyes was created for this poor blind man… We are made a new creation, through and through…

People ought to notice a difference in you when you come to Christ…

\*\*\* Notice lastly,

**5. His Testimony of What Happened to Him**

\*\*\* Notice first,

**a. The question his neighbors asked**

After the once blind man convinces his neighbors and friends of his true identity they want to know how it happened, because it’s not everyday that you see someone in your neighborhood healed of blindness.

Look at verse 10 with me…

**John 9:10 ( KJV )
Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?**

They wanted to know what brought about this extreme change in his life. They knew without a doubt that something happened, but they wanted to know how it happened.

* The world is always curious of how a drunkard becomes clean.
* How a once greedy man could now tithe.
* How a once angry hearted individual could become soft hearted and loving.

So when it happens the world asks, HOW???!!!

Just look around you in the auditorium today and you’ll see how the Lord opened spiritual eyes…

This once blind man’s neighbors couldn’t understand how… even after it was explained to them… it was too powerful and awesome to understand with the natural mind…

Neither do the people of the world understand the “how” of salvation… That’s why Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:14…

**1 Corinthians 2:14 ( NKJV )
But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them,* because they are spiritually discerned.**

The world will never understand the inward workings of the Spirit… because you can’t see it… you can only see the result… (Salvation) (A changed life).

* A life of love where there used to be hate.
* A life of compassion where there used to be selfishness
* A life of mercy where there used to be law, rules and lists.
* A life of patience where there used to be impatience.
* Someone who used to drink all night now sings all day.
* Someone who used to be on the wrong path now is dancing on the high road.
* Someone who used to fight with others now lifting up holy hands in praise to God.

The world can’t understand that. And it never will… Until they meet Christ!!!

\*\*\* Notice,

**b. His answer**

Look at verse 11 with me…

**John 9:11 ( KJV )
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.**

He told them that Jesus did it… not the disciples… not the religious leaders…

Jesus alone did it…

The Apostle Paul repeatedly gave his testimony… Telling of how he met Jesus… Have you told your testimony lately?

**I want to open the altars** for you to come and worship your Lord this morning…

Maybe you have a need…

* Salvation – come get my attention
* Baptism – come get my attention
* Move your membership to this church – get my attention
* Maybe you just need to pray alone with God

Whatever your need is this morning would you come and join me and others as the altars are now open for you.

**\*\*\* Closing prayer**