



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
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The Gospel of John

The Blind Man (part 2)

John 9

Last Sunday we began our study of John 9 in which John gives to us the record of the **SIXTH SIGN** performed by Jesus — **The Healing of the Blind Man.**

We began by reading the entire chapter. I made some running comments as we read through the chapter. Then we spent the majority of our time working our way through the first four verses of the Chapter.

First we made note of the fact that this event is connected in subject-matter, in time, place, occasion, and theme, with the events of chapters 7-8 in which Jesus revealed Himself as *the Light of the World*. From that revelation of Himself He deliberately walks into the life of a man who had been sitting in physical darkness for his entire life — *blind from birth*

The phrase *blind from birth* brought us face to face with the question — *Why there is suffering in the world?* The disciples of Jesus — like most Jews of their day — believed that sin and suffering were intimately connected. In the broadest sense they are absolutely correct. Suffering and death are directly tied to the fall of man and the entrance of sin into this world, recorded in **Genesis 3**. But they made the grave error of moving from the general connection between sin and suffering to explaining all specific suffering is the result of specific sin.

²And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”— literally “who sinned, this man or his parents, **in order that** he should be born blind?”

³Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents,

Jesus wasn’t saying that they were sinless — He knew every one of their sins! But He was being very clear in saying that their sin was not the cause of the man’s blindness. We learned that on the basis of grammar and context that the passage could be read —

³ “His blindness has nothing to do with his sins or his parents’ sins. **PERIOD** But that God’s power might be seen at work in him, ⁴ **we must keep on doing the works of him who sent me as long as it is day.**”

Here is Jesus — who is **the SUBJECT** of Biblical theology! The very subject of our theology becomes a man! Which would make Jesus the **ULTIMATE** theologian.

Colossians 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

But the ultimate theologian **ONLY** addresses their theological error

He **DOES NOT** give us the definitive answer to the question that has plagued man from the beginning of human history. **THAT** answer falls under **Deuteronomy 29:29**

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Instead, Jesus simply says that the man’s blindness offers an opportunity to show God’s power at work in him, and that Jesus himself has come to reveal that power at work in history.

QUOTE: William Barclay — *God never so fully reveals his glory as when he reveals his pity....Affliction, sorrow, pain, disappointment, loss always are opportunities for displaying God's grace.*

We closed by looking at how our theological error or theological pride can hinder us from seeing **the pathos of the human condition in this lost world!** To the **disciples** the blind man was the occasion for **theological speculation**. The

disciples were moved by **theological controversy** and **curiosity** rather than **tenderhearted compassion**.

To **Jesus** he was a **person** — a **human being living under the curse** *desperately needing the healing touch of God*.

Right before their eyes was a man suffering under the Curse of **Genesis 3** — sitting in the dust of the earth — blind and begging — and these **followers of Jesus** — wanted to stop to talk **about** him — not talk **to** him. Unlike the disciples, Jesus didn't treat this guy as some theological dilemma!

So let's work our way through the chapter again — and re-visit in greater detail some of the comments we made in our overview.

¹As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents (**period**), but that the works of God might be displayed in him ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

The disciples wanted to talk theology — Jesus said WE have work to do.

⁴ *We must work*

1.) Jesus includes us in the work that the Father sent Him to do.

⁴ *We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day;*

After His resurrection, Jesus said — *As the Father has sent Me, so I send you!*

We are co-laboring together with the risen Jesus. *1 Corinthians 3:9* ⁹*For we are God's fellow workers.*

2.) It is not EASY work.

work = to engage in activity that involves effort — *to work with one's hands* *1*

Cor 4:12; 1 Th 4:11; 1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:8 Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed.) (389). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

For a lot of Christians, serving the Lord is O.K. as long as it isn't WORK!

This word should make us remember Jesus in **John 4** — Exhausted — hungry — thirsty at Jacob's well. John told us that Jesus HAD to make that exhausting journey. His Father had a work for Him to do there: The work of introducing a woman to *living water*; the work of introducing her to *true worship*; the work of introducing her to Himself, the Messiah. Jesus EXHAUSTED HIMSELF in getting to her!

Jesus — our LORD — has set the example. Jesus — Our LORD said — *As the Father SENT Him, He SENDS us!* The apostle Paul would say — *Follow me as I FOLLOW Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1)*. Paul followed Christ's example of working hard in the work the Father sent Jesus to do.

1 Thessalonians 2:9 For you remember, brothers, our labor (same word as John 9:4) and toil.

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

3.) We only have so much time to work.

** We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day;*

A number of commentators spent time trying to define exactly is meant by the terms DAY and NIGHT. I don't think we have to labor over what is meant by day and what is meant by night. Work in Biblical times was essentially limited to daylight hours. Apart from rare exceptions (such as shepherds, night watchmen, or special messengers), no one works in the dark. They didn't have electricity or those massive generators and light towers that Cal Trans workers use enabling them to work through the night on freeway construction and repair as if it were mid-day. Simply put we only have so much time to get the job done.

We make the error of compartmentalizing our time on earth. There is my time and there is God's time. God gets church time — Sunday morning and maybe Monday night. Some people think themselves generous with their time and money if they add a Thursday night and — they think they are extraordinarily generous if they throw in some short-term missions trip. Listen — It ALL belongs to God. The part of our lives that we call "CHURCH-life" is the most obvious place that we should be co-laboring with Jesus in the work that the

Father sent Him to do. We trust that whenever we gather in the Name of Jesus that we will RECEIVE from the Lord. It is our prayer that because of what happens within these walls at Metro, others, countless others, will RECEIVE from the Lord. Though we receive from the Lord, we should never come as *takers* — we should come as *givers*. It is my prayer that Metro will mature into a family of GIVERS — men and women who see our time together as an extension of the work that the Father sent Jesus to do —the work that Jesus says is also OUR WORK!

But 1660 E. Roseville Pkwy., Suite 100 is not the single compartment that encompasses our labor in the Lord. Outside of these walls our lives are to be a non-stop expression of worship that transforms the secular moments of life into sacred moments. We get to participate in the work the Father gave Jesus to do EVERYDAY and in EVERY PLACE.

The apostle Paul used a great word to help us see the reality of time constraints in our work in the Kingdom

Ephesians 5:16 KJV Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Redeeming ἡξαγοράζω (exagorazō)

Thayers Greek Dictionary — by payment of a price to recover from the power of another, to ransom, buy off — to buy up, to buy up for one's self, for one's use. We are to do that with our TIME!

HERE'S THE PICTURE — What if I told you that I was going to open a checking account for every one of you today. I'm going to deposit in that account \$1,440 every day. But here's the catch. You cannot carry over any balance. If you don't use every penny of that \$1,440 dollars within a 24 hour period, your account is zeroed out at midnight and then another \$1,440 dollars is deposited, on the same terms. I can guarantee that you would make sure that you spent every penny, every day. You'd be scouring eBay and Craig's list and newspapers looking for the best deals on the best stuff.

LISTEN — God has given to us an account that is infinitely more valuable. Everyday He deposits in YOUR LIFE 1,440 MINUTES. Everyday He deposits into YOUR LIFE 1,440 MINUTES. You cannot carry over ONE second of those minutes to tomorrow's balance. The minutes you didn't use today in that work is LOST. I'm not saying that you can't or shouldn't go golfing or surfing or riding. I'm not saying you can't or shouldn't go to the beach or to the pool. God made

the Sabbath for man! We see the way that He ordained seasons for us to move through — seasons of labor and seasons for rest. **The question** is — How do we use those minutes — and what amount of those 1,440 minutes do we co-labor with Jesus in the works of the Father.

QUOTE: J.C. RYLE — *Opportunities once lost can never be retrieved. A second lease of life is granted to no man. Then let us resist procrastination as we would resist the devil. Whatever our hand finds to do, let us do it with our might. "The night comes, when no man can work."*

Jesus knew that his earthly ministry would only last three years — and knowing that He redeemed the time. Every single day — morning, noon, and night — He poured Himself out in His Father's business. It was His food and drink to do His Father's will, and to finish His work.

QUOTE: J.C. Ryle — *His whole life breathed one sentiment--"I must work--the night comes, when no man can work."*

6) Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud

A FEW THOUGHTS HERE —

1.) *Having said these things* — The phrase “having said these things” ties 9:6 tightly to 9:5. So this sixth miracle/sign is the practical example of what Jesus had just said. They wanted to talk theology, Jesus said — I have been SENT — and WE have work to do — and we have to do it now. THEN — **without procrastination** — Jesus immediately sets out to heal the man born blind.

2.) In THIS miracle, Jesus took all the initiative. The blind man did not come to Jesus and ask to be healed, Jesus came to Him. Jesus, the Light of the World, is the initiator. Jesus, the Light of the World is the healer. But as we will see in a moment — Though Jesus is the initiator and healer — he expected the blind man to respond in faith (**Go, wash in the pool of Siloam**).

3.) *he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud* — In THIS miracle Jesus used spit and dirt — and then a specific location (Pool of Siloam) in the healing of THIS blind man. Once Jesus healed two blind men by merely touching their eyes ([Matt. 9:27-31](#)). He healed another blind man by putting spittle on his eyes ([Mark 8:22-26](#)). Jesus

healed a blind man named Bartimaeus by merely speaking ([Mark 10:46](#)). Again — everything that Jesus did was deliberate. He deliberately chose different ways and different locations to heal so that we could never reduce Jesus to a METHOD or a FORMULA. There is no formula; no methodology; no anything to save us from spiritual blindness except to look to Jesus. Once again — It really is ALL ABOUT JESUS!

Following from that — He worked in different ways in different peoples' lives so that we could never measure the saving and healing work of God in someone else's life by comparing it to the way Jesus saved or healed us! "Did you pray this prayer.... If not you can't really be saved!" "Did you raise your hand or come forward?" "Did you feel warm and tingly all over? Well then you weren't really healed." Jesus worked in such diverse ways in the lives of such diverse people that we can't use our personal testimony as the benchmark for genuine salvation or healing. The great question is not HOW (remember that was the foremost concern of the skeptics in this event) — nor is it WHAT did you feel. The great question is — Are the eyes of our understanding opened? Do we see?

REMEMBER — John refers to these miracles as SIGNS — the healing, the person healed, the means by which Jesus healed — is packed with meaning.

As Jesus uses the dust of the ground we are pointed Jesus as the creator of man. Then one who formed man from the dust (Genesis 2) now extends compassion and healing to fallen man — by using the dust of the earth.

We also learn from this that Jesus sometimes sovereignly chooses to use THINGS He has created to be a part of His life changing work! Did Jesus NEED to use spit and dirt to heal this blind man? No! But He chose to use spit and dirt in this man's healing. I'm reminded of how Paul says that we are just jars of clay

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

Clay is just a bunch of spit and dirt. Amazingly Jesus **chooses to use lumps of spit and dirt** like you and me to be a part of His compassionate, life-changing work in this dark world. No matter the ability of the clay jar — it is only Jesus who can heal, who can save. That means that our greatest ABILITY is our AVAILABILITY!

BOTTOM LINE — We must simply leave it to the great Physician to choose the instrument, the means, the manner and the place in which He saves and heals.

4.) The means of the healing also serves as a great picture for the work of God in salvation through the preaching of the Gospel. I'm pretty certain that NO ONE here would appreciate it if I made mud out of my spit and rubbed it in your eyes. I'm pretty certain that NO ONE here would appreciate it if I made mud out of my spit and rubbed it in your eyes. You would say — *Isn't there a better way to fix me than THIS?* Or — *Hey, I've got a better idea!* A lot of people don't appreciate the way that God has chosen to save us! They are constantly offering what they think is a "better way" to be saved.

Many look at how Jesus did this miracle and find it offensive. In the same way, some feel that the gospel is offensive — Jesus being brutally murdered because of my sin is offensive. Surely there could have been a less offensive and less bloody way to save me. Not only is the cross offensive because it unthinkably violent and grotesque — but it offends me because the brutality of His death tells me how horrible MY sin is! *He was wounded for our transgressions; crushed for our iniquities.*

It is true that the cross offends human pride and human wisdom — but *it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe (1 Corinthians 1:21).*

Not only would you find it disgusting if I made mud from spit and put it in your eyes; you would find it irritating. But the reason for the clay was to create an *irritation* that would move the man to believe and obey — move him to the Pool of Siloam! If you have ever got dirt or sand in your eye — the pain and irritation moved you to quickly seek *irrigation* to cleanse it out! When the Holy Spirit uses God's Law to bring lost man under the conviction of sin it is very uncomfortable — it is irritating! That irritation / conviction is designed to move you to run to the "*water of the Word*" for *irrigation* — run to the promise of the forgiveness of sin through faith in Jesus.