



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
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The Gospel of John

The Blind Man (part 3)

John 9

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, 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.” ⁶Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud ⁷and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent).

Last week we made the observation that 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” (which means Sent).*

A little history here — In 701 BC Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was about to invade Jerusalem. King Hezekiah knew that he had to secure the water supply for the city in the event that the Assyrians laid siege to the city. His strategy was to cut through solid rock and make a tunnel or conduit from the spring outside of the city walls into the city ([2Chr 32:2-8](#); [2Chr 32:30](#);

[Isa 22:9-11](#); [2Ki 20:20](#)). Had they cut through the rock in a straight line it would have been a distance of 366 yards (3 ½ football fields) — but because they had to cut in a zig-zag patten, the conduit is actually 583 yards (nearly 6 football fields). The tunnel is at places only about two feet wide, but its average height is about six feet. The engineers began their cutting from both ends and met in the middle — a truly amazing engineering feat.

The Pool of Siloam was the place where the water *sent* from outside of the city was collected. It was an open air basin twenty by thirty feet. That is how the pool got its name. It was called Siloam — or *sent* — because **the water in it had been sent** — **one could almost say in a miraculous way** — through the 6 plus football fields of conduit into the city.

NOW — The man born blind was SENT — to wash in this pool called SENT. What a beautiful picture of how the only way to have our spiritual blindness healed is to **go to the One miraculously SENT** into this world by the Father to WASH us — and SHINE into our hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

We pick up in that same verse —

So he went and washed and came back seeing. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus

INTERESTING — They ask HOW! We are going to see that the question *HOW were you healed?* is going to be asked FOUR times. They were all asking the wrong question! We are so prone to ask THAT question because there is something in our pride that needs to understand the mechanics of a miracle — the mechanics of salvation — rather than simply trusting the Savior — who alone can save — who alone can perform the miracle. Remember — Nicodemus wanted to know how he could reenter his mother’s womb ([John 3:4; 9](#)). Remember — The people wanted to “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” ([John 36:52](#)). Intellectual understanding is no guarantee that we have genuine faith — no guarantee that we will experience salvation; experience the miracle.

The people are asking HOW — the healed man answered WHO! Salvation is ALL ABOUT the WHO. Yes, there is a HOW — death on the cross. But the WHO on the cross is most important. Only the sacrifice of the sinless Son of God is sufficient to pay the penalty for our sins. Only the blood of God's Son can cleanse a man from all sin. Only the sinless Son of God could lay down His life and then take it up again — thus conquering death and guaranteeing our salvation.

made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

Here we see the role of Jesus — and the responsibility of man. On another occasion Jesus said to a man with a withered hand —

Luke 6:8-10 "Come and stand here." And he rose and stood there. ⁹And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰And after looking around at them all he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored.

In each of those cases their physical healing was conditional on compliance with His conditions.

HERE'S THE PICTURE — Obedience brings sight. He was the recipient of the miracle because he OBEYED the healer. A wonderful picture of what the New Testament calls the "*obedience of faith*" (*Romans 1:15; 16:26*) and *obeying the Gospel* (*2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17*).

Many men and women are still groping in spiritual darkness — without God and having no hope — because in their spiritual pride they insist on knowing HOW God can save us by the bloody and brutal death of a man nailed to a cross in 32 AD in a land filled with dirt and rocks! In their pride they view salvation as a mystery to be unlocked, a riddle to be solved — and if they can only discover the HOW of being saved, they will have "saved" themselves. That is why so many people buy into very complicated, complex systems of religion that demand they must understand and do so many things!

Jesus didn't make it complicated —

Mark 1:14-15 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the

kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

LISTEN — There are a TON of genuine Christians who are struggling with particular issues because they want to know HOW God is going to save their marriage or their kids or their jobs or whatever. There comes a time when you must lay aside the HOW and trust the WHO! **Obey what you do know** — *husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it (Eph 5:25); Wives be subject to your husbands in all things as unto the Lord (Eph 5:22); children obey your parents in the Lord (Eph. 6:1); Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you (Luke 6:27-28).*

Bow your mind and your will to the Word of God and the Son of God — Go and wash and come back seeing! .

¹¹So I went and washed and received my sight.”

He no doubt thought — “*wait till everyone hears what happened!*” But it didn’t play out that way!

¹⁵They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

The THEY would be the neighbors and those who had seen him begging.

What a weird response to a miracle!

You would think they would have been praising God for the miracle — rejoicing with the man or going back into the temple to bring an offering to God.

¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”

We’ve spent a lot of time talking about the countless laws and traditions concerning the Sabbath. We won’t take the time to review it — but here are a few notes from William Barclay to reference on your own time

(i) By making clay he had been guilty of working on the Sabbath when even the simplest acts constituted work. Here are some of the things which were forbidden on the Sabbath. "A man may not fill a dish with oil and put it beside a lamp and put the end of the wick in it." "If a man extinguishes a lamp on the Sabbath to spare the lamp or the oil or the wick, he is culpable." "A man may not go out on the Sabbath with sandals shod with nails." (The weight of the nails would have constituted a burden, and to carry a burden was to break the Sabbath.) A man might not cut his finger nails or pull out a hair of his head or his beard. Obviously in the eyes of such a law to make clay was to work and so to break the Sabbath.

(ii) It was forbidden to heal on the Sabbath. Medical attention could be given only if life was in actual danger. Even then it must be only such as to keep the patient from getting worse, not to make him any better. For instance, a man with toothache might not suck vinegar through his teeth. It was forbidden to set a broken limb. "If a man's hand or foot is dislocated he may not pour cold water over it." Clearly the man who was born blind was in no danger of his life; therefore Jesus broke the Sabbath when he healed him.

William Barclay — *The Daily Bible Study Series: The Gospel of John, Vol. 1*

You can also look at our study in **John 3** for more reference material on the rules and traditions surrounding the Sabbath.

By THEIR definition Jesus broke the Sabbath law because he MADE mud and then PUT mud on his eyes.

But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

The healed man recognizes Jesus as a MAN and as PROPHET

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

AMAZING — They are laboring really hard to deny the miracle so that they won't have to believe in Jesus. So it is today — People see you're changed life — see you walking in the light of the Gospel of Jesus — and they try to say that nothing really happened in your life — it's all a fabrication — just so they can hold on to their unbelief and idolatry.

DON'T MISS THIS — They were determined not to believe. They were determined that **no evidence** could or would change their minds. They would controvert or deny **any** proof that could influence their will to believing in Jesus. It is not that they could not believe — it was that they would not believe. It was not — “*I can't.*” It was a matter of — “*I won't.*” We remember the words of Jesus as looked over the city of Jerusalem —

Matthew 23:37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and **you WOULD not!**”

Later — these same men covered their ears when Stephen preached ([Acts 7:59](#)), and refused to listen when Paul made his defense ([Acts 22:22](#))!

²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”

John is going to give the explanation for the parents' response.

²²(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)

²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

The religious authorities held a powerful weapon over the people — the weapon of excommunication. They had the power to completely shut a man or woman off from the congregation of God's people. All of the way back to the time of Ezra (538 BC / [Ezra 10:8](#)) we read of a decree that whosoever did not obey the command of the authorities “*his property should be forfeited and he himself banned from the congregation.*” Jesus — warned his disciples that their name would be excluded as disreputable ([Luke 6:22](#)). He told them that they would be put out of the synagogues ([John 16:12](#)).

REMEMBER — The first Christians were Jews! They suffered radically for believing that Jesus is the Son of God — promised Messiah of Israel!

Many of the rulers in Jerusalem really believed in Jesus, but were afraid to say so “lest they should be put out of the synagogue” ([John 12:42](#)).

QUOTE: William Barclay — *There were two kinds of excommunication. There was the ban, the cherem, by which a man was banished from the synagogue for life. In such a case he was publicly anathematized. He was cursed in the presence of the people, and he was cut off from God and from man. There was sentence of temporary excommunication which might last for a month, or for some other fixed period. The terror of such a situation was that a Jew would regard it as shutting him out, not only from the synagogue but from God. The Pharisees were so venomously embittered against Jesus that they were prepared to do what ecclesiastics at their worst have sometimes done--to use ecclesiastical procedure to further their own ends.*

That is why the man's parents answered that their son was quite old enough to be a legal witness and to answer his own questions.

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

Here was a man with virtually ZERO information or understanding. He only knew the WHO and the WHAT in connection with what had just happened to him! But there was one thing that he could not deny — and no one could argue — He had experienced the touch of God upon his life

I DO know that though I was blind, now I see!

LISTEN — Even though you might not be an authority on Theology — you are the world's greatest authority on **what Jesus has done for you!**

You may not be able to articulate with theologically correct language what you believe about Jesus — but you can bear witness to what Jesus has done in saving them. You might not know what “propitiation” means — but you know in your heart that Jesus has saved you from the wrath that is to come. You may not know what “expiation” means — but you know in your heart that that Jesus has removed the guilt of your sin!

QUOTE: William Barclay — *Even when a man cannot understand with his intellect, he can still feel with his heart. It is better to love Jesus than to love theories about him.*

QUOTE: J.C. Ryle — *There is no kind of evidence so satisfactory as this to the heart of a real Christian. His knowledge may be small. His faith may be feeble. His doctrinal views may be at present confused and indistinct. But if Christ has really wrought a work of grace in his heart by His Spirit, he feels within him something that you cannot overthrow. "I was dark, and now I have light. I was afraid of God, and now I love Him. I was fond of sin, and now I hate it. I was blind, and now I see." Let us never rest until we know and feel within us some real work of the Holy Spirit. Let us not be content with the name and form of Christianity. Let us desire to have true experimental acquaintance with it. Feelings no doubt, are deceitful, and are not everything in religion. But if we have no inward feelings about spiritual matters, it is a very bad sign. The hungry man eats, and feels strengthened; the thirsty man drinks, and feels refreshed. Surely the man who has within him the grace of God, ought to be able to say, "I feel its power."*

²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

Very real options: Moses or Jesus — Law or Grace. Once again we are tethered to the prologue —

***John 1:17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

In their pride they were holding on to the Law; which could NEVER save them and ONLY condemn them; while they rejected Jesus — who is the ONLY one who could save them — and if they believed would NEVER condemn them. In your pride are you holding on to anything that can never save you?

²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing!

More amazing miraculously receiving his sight

**You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?”
And they cast him out.**

This man knew perfectly well what the Pharisees thought of Jesus. He knew perfectly well that if he showed himself to be on Jesus' side he would be excommunicated.

But he made his statement — he took his stand. In essence he said — "I am going to continue to believe in him, I am going to continue to stand by him because of all that he has done for me."

³⁵Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him

Jesus knows this guy has suffered a tremendous humiliation and loss because of his loyalty to Jesus. Jesus goes to him! THAT is our Jesus.

This is also a beautiful **preview** and **example** of what Jesus is going to say about Himself in the next chapter — *I am the good shepherd*.

he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

Son of Man is a term found in Daniel that refers to the Messiah as the King who will come in glory and power and rule the world.

³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe,”

The merciful touch of Jesus on this man’s life in regards to his physical blindness did not bring salvation to this man. **It was a SIGN that pointed him to Jesus** and led him to recognize and believe in Jesus as MAN — PROPHET — MESSIAH — and LORD.

Loyalty to Jesus can be painful — It can bring persecution or rejection at the hands of men. But when you hold on to Jesus — refuse to deny him for the sake of personal comfort — you discover Jesus drawing near to comfort and strengthen you. The reward of that loyalty is a greater revelation and understanding of Jesus.

and he worshiped him.

WHAT was that like? The OUTPOURING of worship and adoration would have been as OVERFLOWING as the revelation was OVERWHELMING!

We can’t understate the truth that — every aspect of the Christian life is RELATIONAL! It is ALL ABOUT JESUS — Who He is and WHAT He has done for us. Our lives as Christians are the continual RESPONSE to WHO Jesus is and what He has done for us.

***Galatians 2:20** I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

***2 Corinthians 5:15** and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*

***Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*

The Christian life is NOT a matter of what you are doing for Jesus. It begins with and ends with WHO Jesus is and WHAT Jesus has done for you — it is YOUR response to WHO Jesus is and WHAT Jesus has done for you!

BY THE WAY — Would you note that this man BELIEVES Jesus to be fully man, a prophet, the Messiah, and WORSHIPS Jesus as Lord — but we don't find the word SIN or REPENT here. This man cannot believe those things and worship Jesus as Lord WITHOUT having repented. There are some who are sinfully critical of evangelism that is missing the word repent. I NEVER want to be sloppy with the Gospel. I NEVER want to present Christ in a way that is misleading. But Jesus saved this man without using the words sin or repent. It was the PERSON of Jesus that caused this man to count everything as dung that he might know Jesus!

³⁹Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things,

WOW! They heard Jesus say He was the Son of Man. They heard and saw the man worship Jesus — and saw Jesus receive worship. If Jesus Christ is not God, then why did He accept worship? Peter, Paul, and Barnabas certainly didn't accept worship ([Acts 10:25–26; 14:11–15](#)).

What a radical warning to you and me this morning — In these men we see the possibility of being SO NEAR to Jesus — so NEAR to being healed of spiritual blindness — yet in reality be SO FAR in our hearts and remain in darkness

Isaiah 29:13 “Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from m

and said to him, “Are we also blind?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

These men were blind because they had no sense of how dark their own hearts were and how desperately they needed Jesus to heal them of their spiritual blindness! Jesus opened His Sermon on the Mount with the words — “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” Life in the Kingdom of heaven BEGINS when you realize you have nothing within yourself that can commend you to God.

NEXT WEEK — John 10. John 10 is actually a continuation of our Lord's ministry to the Pharisees. The healing of the man born blind provides the backdrop for it

John 10:21 Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

The man born blind was cast out of the synagogue by man — but taken by the Good Shepherd and added to His flock!