

Subject: *Opening Blind Eyes*

Scripture: *John 9:1-12*

The Gospel of John records eight miracles to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. These miracles (signs) were selected from the many miracles Jesus performed and they were chosen for a special purpose, **John 20:30-31**³⁰ *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*³¹ *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

1. Turning water into wine (2:1-11)
2. Healing the official's son (4:46-54)
3. Healing the lame man (5:1-9)
4. Feeding the multitude (6:1-14)
5. Walking on the water (6:15-21)
6. Healing the blind man (9:1-7)

The other two miracles are raising Lazarus from the dead (Jn. 11) and the miraculous catch of fish (Jn. 21). In our text we have the sixth miracle in which Jesus healed a man blind from birth. This is the only time Jesus healed someone with a congenital problem (afflicted from birth). As with all the miracles this one should cause everyone to believe in Jesus and receive Him as Lord and Savior. Sadly that was not the case then and it's not the case now. Some receive Christ and others reject Christ. There is no middle ground. Where do you stand?

CONCERN (vs. 1)

In the United States someone goes blind every 20 minutes. This man was born blind. He never saw a sunrise or sunset. He never saw the faces of his loved ones. He never read a book. We should never take our eyesight for granted. I met a blind man named Robert Rodriguez on a bus in Wytheville, VA. Robert was born blind and lived in New York City. As Jesus passed by this man couldn't see Him, but Jesus saw him and that made all the difference. We love Him because He first loved us. Do you remember a man named Zacchaeus? He had two problems: he was a despised sinner and he was short. So he ran ahead and climbed into a sycamore tree to see Jesus but he didn't want to be seen. But Jesus stopped under that tree and looked up at him and told him to get down out of the tree. Jesus went to his house and saved him and gave him a new heart.

CURIOSITY (vs. 2)

Like many people the disciples made a direct connection between suffering and sin (Job's friends; Lk. 13:1-5). The Jews believed a baby could actually sin inside the mother's womb before it was born. There is a basic connection of suffering and sin that goes back to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. We live in a cursed world and all of us suffer the consequences of original sin.

CORRECTION (vs. 3-5)

The disciples looked on this blind man as a subject to be discussed. Jesus knew it was not a time for discussion, but a time for action. This man was blind for a reason and that was to reveal the works of God in him. Jesus was referring to God's great works of healing and salvation. Jesus is the light of the world and He is the sight of the world. He gives light in the darkness and He gives sight to the blind. We need light and we need sight. What good is light if you can't see? Jesus gives physical light and spiritual sight.

CURE (vs. 6-7)

This is the only time Jesus ever required anyone to do something other than believe in order to be healed. Remember that the word for miracle in John is "sign." A sign is a miracle with an underlying deeper message. Why did Jesus make the clay and put it on this man's eyes and then tell him to wash in the pool of Siloam? The clay represents our basic human nature.

Genesis 2:7 *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 soul.* Applying the clay could not help this man see and it is an object lesson to us that there is no human solution for our blindness. Jesus told him to wash in the pool of Siloam (means "Sent"). Over and over Jesus said the Father sent Him into the world. Jesus is the Sent One (Jn. 8:16, 18, 29, 42; 9:4). Jesus is the only cure for blindness. We find three methods Jesus used when He healed blind people. In Matthew 9, He healed by touching the person. In Mark 8, He spit on the man's eyes. Here in John 9, He used clay or mud and told the man to wash. Someone suggested that three denominations probably started up as a result of those three methods of healing: the muddites, the spittites, and the touchites. People are so caught up with certain methods that we forget the power is not in the method, but in the Master.

CONFUSION (vs. 8-12)

There were some questions about the man's identity and the miracle of his healing. This was such an unbelievable miracle, the people wanted to find out more.

CONTROVERSY (vs. 13-23)

When the Pharisees got involved things got ugly. This miracle took place on the Sabbath day and it greatly disturbed the Pharisees who questioned the blind man and his parents. This man's parents were hesitant to say anything about Jesus because they were afraid of being excommunicated or kicked out of the synagogue. Many more people were afraid for the same reason, **John 12:42-43** ⁴² *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: ⁴³ For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

Proverbs 29:25 *The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*

The healing of this blind man should have been enough proof for the Pharisees and all the Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah. When Jesus preached His first sermon in the Nazareth synagogue He turned to a Messianic prophecy, **Luke 4:18** *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.* When John the Baptist was in prison he was struggling with doubt and so he sent two disciples to Jesus to confirm whether He was truly the Messiah

or if it would be someone else. **Matthew 11:4-5** ⁴ *Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see:* ⁵ *The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

CONFLICT (vs. 24-34)

The Pharisees at first doubted the miracle, and then they disliked the miracle, but they couldn't deny it, so they tried to discredit Jesus. This set them at odds with the blind man. Back and forth they debated. On one side of the debate you have the self-righteous religious leaders and on the other you have a common man without any religious training, but he had one big advantage...he had a testimony and he knew the truth (vs. 25). A Christian with a testimony is never at the mercy of an unbeliever with an argument. The truth was on his side. The world has no appetite for truth, but the truth will stand when the world's on fire. As former NBC news anchor John Chancellor once said: "Facts are stubborn things."

CONVERSION (vs. 35-38)

The Jews cast him out of the synagogue, but when they cast him out Jesus sought him out and found him. Jesus had given him physical sight, but now He gave him spiritual sight. His spiritual eyes were opened to understand who Jesus was, to believe in Him and worship Him. Look at this man's journey of faith. First of all, he obeyed Christ's command to go and wash in the pool of Siloam (vs. 7). He only knows that he was a man called Jesus (vs. 11). Then he called Jesus a prophet (vs. 17). Then he said Jesus was "of God" (vs. 33). Finally he believed on Him and worshiped Him as the Son of God. Worship is the supreme act of faith. To be able to see is a great miracle of healing, but this is a much greater miracle of saving grace: "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found, 'twas blind but now I see."

CONDEMNATION (vs. 39-41)

There's a condition far worse than being blind and that is to be spiritually blind. Jesus once described the Pharisees and spiritual leaders as "blind leaders of the blind" and He said that both will fall into the ditch (Mt. 15:14). The root problem of spiritual blindness is pride (vs. 41). A person must admit that he needs Jesus. The worst kind of blindness is the person who refuses to see his need. How ironic that the people who thought they could see so well were so blind they couldn't see at all.

It is a blessing to have physical eyes to see, but the greatest blessing is when God opens our spiritual eyes to see who Jesus truly is and see ourselves as we truly are so that we will humble ourselves to Him, believe in Him and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

Peter speaks of believers as those who have not seen Jesus with physical eyes and yet believe in Him. After Jesus was raised from the dead Thomas said he would not believe until he had seen Christ for himself. Jesus was gracious to him and made a special appearance and then said, **John 20:29** *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*