

**Lighthouse Bible Church**

**September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**John 9: 1 – 5**

*Scripture Reading Luke 13: 1 - 5*

**‘The Works of God Revealed’**

**Stand – Read – Pray**

You remember last time that the religious leaders had been telling Jesus that they were the spiritual children of Abraham, that Abraham and God were their Father and that they were in bondage to no one.

They even called Jesus the product of fornication and a demon possessed man and then when Jesus finishes talking with them, they took up stones to kill Him for what they thought was blaspheme.

Jesus had just finished telling the religious leaders that they were slaves of sin and that His word had not place in them and that they could not be Abraham’s or God’s children because they don’t love Him and they want to kill Him.

Then He tells them that their father is the devil and his desires they want to do and then He finishes His dialogue by telling them that He is the I AM of the Old Testament, He is Yawhew God, God in human form.

At that point, they are so angry and resentful and hateful toward Him that they pick up stones to kill Him but He leaves the temple and escapes without notice. They have totally rejected Him and His message and they will die in their sin that will cast them into hell and ultimately to the resurrection of condemnation that we saw in **John 5: 29**.

Jesus and His true disciples leave the temple and they come across this blind man in Chapter 9 Verse 1 that Jesus is about to heal, and that is where we want to pick it up this morning. This is another one of those miracles recorded to show Jesus healing power as God in human form and then His own claim to be God.

The miracle we see hear is the miracle of the healing of a man **born** blind. We are encouraged and drawn to this kind of miracle and any miracle where someone is healed of some type of disease or infirmity, because we can identify with them.

We live in a fallen world today that is full of disease, full of physical deformities and ailments and tragic and painful medical issues that assault our bodies. From west Nile, to AIDS, to the flu, measles, chicken pocks, heart and lung problems, gangrene, kidney disease, hearing and vision problems to melanoma to internal cancers of all kinds.

And as we know all too well, hundreds of thousands of people have died and die annually as a result of many of these medical issues. Our modern medicine and medications have a very limited healing capacity.

When it comes to healing there is the limited healing that our own bodies do when we have a cut or minor scrape where the body rebuilds and heals itself. There is our limited medical healing through operations and medications. There is physical healing when psychological and mental issues of stress are addressed. But the one we see in our passage here is the divine healing, the miraculous healing where no natural process or medication or surgery or psychology can help.

So when we come across a passage like this and we see the most extreme of medical problems, a man blind from birth, we are encouraged when we see the divine healing of a seemingly hopeless, from man's perspective, medical problem.

We can look in both the Old and New Testament and see many recorded cases of divine healings of someone who could be healed by no other means. Leprosy, terminal illness, poisonous snake bites, and even death itself was reversed by God's divine decree.

In the N.T. you see divine healing after healing by Jesus and His apostles of lame people, demon possessed people, paralyzed people and even raising dead people back to life. Again, only by the power and will and decree of God could those be done.

There is something about those kinds of divine healing miracles that draw us to them and encourage us because we have them in our lives today but can seem to do little or nothing about them, especially the severe medical kind like people born blind or people who have died.

Unfortunately, in our day and time, there are some people who try to take advantage of those who are sick or diseased or physically infirm and they do so in the name of religion and they do so in the name of Christ. I am talking about the so called faith healers and supposed miracle workers who, many times, prey on these victims or use them to promote themselves.

Some of you have asked me in the past about some of these 'healers' that you have seen on TV or read or hear about and wonder if they could actually be the real thing. The only way to find out is to put their life, their message and their healing ministry under the lens of scripture to see if it is true.

Just as a side note, you notice that much of the healing that goes on today is usually some internal or psychosomatic problem that, in many cases cannot be verified, that is healed, or it's no divine healing but an addressing of the stressors that cause the illness.

If all faith healers of today admit that they are healing by the divine power of God and Christ, which most of them do, then let's look at the character of Christ's healing as a comparison. Because only God and through the power of God can anyone perform the type of miracles Jesus performed and that are listed in scripture.

When Jesus healed He healed with only a word or a touch and sometimes at great distances from the person being healed. When Jesus healed the healing was instantaneous. When Jesus healed it was a complete healing where the person could begin or resume a normal life, whether it was seeing, hearing, walking or living again. When Jesus healed, He healed anyone who came to Him and many who didn't even ask for healing. When Jesus healed, He healed every type of internal and external physical disease and infirmity. And one last thing that Jesus did was He was able to raise people from the dead.

So as we begin to look at this passage, Jesus heals this blind man and not by natural means and not with any medicine and not with any psychology but through a divine miracle that is outside the natural realm. And this is the only recorded healing miracle by Jesus of a man who was that way from birth.

All throughout this passage that fact is stated over and over again that he was 'born blind' and there was no natural, medicinal or psychological way to heal such a person. The writer John wants everyone to know, once again, that Christ is God and He will show them that He is by the demonstration of a healing miracle that can be explained no other way.

And this is the final miracle and the last straw for the religious Jews because even in this they will not believe because they are more concerned that it was done on another Sabbath day Verse 14 says. That is why after this Jesus begins to spend time with His closest disciples preparing them for His departure. So let's look starting in Verse 1.

**Verse 1: now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.**

You remember that Jesus had just left the temple after confronting the religious leaders who were ready to take up stones to kill Him and He leaves without detection.

When He leaves He comes across **a man who was blind from birth.** This blind man, like many of the lame people, may have been brought to the area near the temple so that he could beg for alms from the passer-byes going to worship. You see that in **Matthew 21: 14, Acts 3: 1 – 2.**

There were many people who were blind at the time of Christ and many recorded healings of them. After all Jesus was doing was **Isaiah 42: 7** said the Messiah would do and that is **‘open the eyes of the blind’**, and He did, over and over again. Also **Matthew 11: 5..the blind see, the lame walk the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up..**

And He sees this blind man and either by talking with Him or having previous knowledge or in His omniscience He knew that this man had been **born blind.** Now this blind man doesn't call out to Jesus for healing, He doesn't acknowledge Jesus as One who could heal him, He doesn't even know it is Jesus who approaches Him until after. He is simply sitting there and Jesus comes up to him and heals him.

That is the sovereign work of God choosing whom He wills to heal. Much like the man who was infirm for 38 years back in John 5. Jesus sovereignly choose whom He choose to heal and in this case He choose this blind man to heal and He'll do it 'so the works of God will be revealed in Him' as Verse 3 says.

You want to know something else, we were all blind, spiritually and could not see Jesus or know Jesus or God until He chose to reveal Himself to us and to heal us of our spiritual blindness. We could not seek out what we could not see.

Listen, you and I were like what Paul said in **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4: 4** where it says **the god of this age, the devil, has blinded the eyes of those who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ should shine on them.** Then Paul says **we preach Christ who alone opens the eyes of the blind.**

That is God's sovereign work of grace and mercy in each of our lives who are born again believers; we were blind because of our sin and He set His love upon us and opened our eyes and forgave our sin. We had not part in that, just like this blind man had not part in seeing from his physical blindness. The healing of the physically blind in scripture is always a vivid illustration of God's healing of the spiritually blind. Then look at verse 2.

**Verse 2: and His disciples asked Him saying 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?'**

The disciples have been following Jesus and they see Him approach this blind man which prompts them to ask a rather interesting question, **'who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind'**.

You see, in that time, the thinking and teaching was that anyone's physical suffering, illness and disease was a direct result of a person's sin. And in this case, it was either his own sin or the sin of his parents that caused him to be born blind. They associated his blindness with some type of sin but they didn't know who to blame.

If it was the parents, then why should the baby have to suffer? If it was the baby, he was born blind and didn't have time to sin, that is not fair either. Although some of the teaching at the time was that a baby could sin in the womb and thus be punished upon birth. And of course these are both not biblical doctrines as we shall see. The disciples are saying 'who is responsible for this punishment'?

They may have had in the back on their mind **Exodus 20: 5** which says **for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me...** a similar thing is repeated in *Numbers 14: 18, Deuteronomy 5: 9, 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 21: 29, Jeremiah 32: 18.* *Talking nationally or in a societal sense, not individual.*

Then you have a passage like **Ezekiel 18: 20** that says **the son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. Or Deuteronomy 24: 16 that says fathers shall not be put to death for their children nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.** *These are in the individual sense.*

Scripture makes it very clear that not all sickness, illness, disease and death is a result of a specific sin. That's what Jesus, in essence, says in Verse 3; 'it's not the parents fault and it's not this mans fault'. In this case it is for God's glory.

We live in a fallen world and because of that we are sometimes the victims of someone else's sin. I think of the statement Jesus makes in **Luke 13: 1 – 5** *Read.*

Job's friends told him that he was going through what he was going through because of some sin in his life; but we know better from reading Job 1 and 2 that it had nothing to do with him. As a matter of fact Job was chosen because he was blameless, upright, turned away from evil and feared God.

But there are times when our specific sin can cause sickness, illness, disease or even death.

You see that in the life of David in **Psalm 32: 1 – 5** and **Psalm 38: 1 - 8** when he says **when I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me, my vitality was turned into the drought of summer...there is no soundness in my flesh ... nor any health in my bones because of my sin. My wounds are foul and festering ... I am troubled and bowed down greatly... my loins are full of inflammation and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and severely broken...**

Paul talked about the people at the church in Corinth in **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11: 29 – 30** that **he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner** (talking about the Lord's table) **eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. FOR THIS REASON many are weak and sick among you and many have died..**

We saw that with the man by the pool of Bethesda who was unable to walk for 38 years and after Jesus heals him, He tells him in **John 5: 14** **see you have been made well. Sin no more lest a worse thing come upon you.**

But that is not always the case and that is the point that Jesus is making with His disciples here in Verse 3.

**Verse 3:** **Jesus answered ‘neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.**

Not that God necessarily allowed this man to be born blind so that at some point in the future he would glorify God in his healing. It is just that he was born blind and by healing him now **the works of God would be revealed in him.** In his blindness he is a miracle waiting to happen. Christ sovereignly chose to use this man's blindness and healing for God's glory. That word ‘revealed’ *phanero* means to render apparent, to manifest, to declare or to show. Then Jesus says in Verse 4.



**Verse 4: I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day, the night is coming when no one can work.**

Jesus has a mission and it is to do **the works** of God, of His Father **who sent Him**. Jesus says these works **must** be done **while it is day** or while there is still time, while I am still here. Because the **night is coming and no one can work**. I will no longer be here, He says.

Verse 4 in some of your versions say ‘WE must work the works of Him who sent me’. In other words Jesus is saying ‘we are in this together, doing the works of God and we have to do it while it is day, while there is still time. Jesus knew that His time was drawing near to an end.

Jesus is saying ‘lets work the works of God while we have our life to do that’. In other words we only have what is left of our lives to do the works of God. That is all we have and what we do for Him we do now or we don’t do it at all. That is why Paul said in **Ephesians 5: 16 redeeming the time for the days are evil**. Are you redeeming the time for God in the time you have left.

That is a call to all of us as it was to His disciples to get on with the business of doing God’s work. Sometimes Christians waste their time on worldly things on selfish things on possessions on entertainment, on sports, on activities, on laziness in not doing anything at all; and Jesus says WE must be about our Father’s business of doing the works we are called to do.

You know what we can do? In **Ephesians 3: 20** it says **now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think** (how) **according to the power that works IN US**. Christ is saying to us born again believers ‘join Me in working the works of My Father’. In the context of what He is saying to His disciples He says

‘I will be here with you a little while longer, like the sunlight of the day. But when night falls I will not be with you any longer’. He is talking about His soon approaching death. He will say a similar thing in **John 12: 35** when He says **a little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.** That is why Jesus says what He does in Verse 5.

**Verse 5: As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.** Jesus is the light of the world that John the Baptist came to testify of in John 1. He is the **true light which gives light to every man coming into the world John 1: 9** says.

And in just a minute He is going to show His disciples and this blind man that He is not only the physical light that will give sight to the blind but He is the spiritual light that will give eternal light and life to his soul.

He is going to touch those blind eyes and for the very first time this blind from birth man was going to see the physical light of day because Jesus is the light of the world. Not only that, but in **Verse 38** Jesus is going to open his spiritual eyes, his soul to the everlasting, eternal light of eternal life. He said **Lord, I believe and he worshipped Him.** Why did Jesus do this? ‘That the works of God should be revealed in him.

What about you here this morning. Are you spiritually blind? Many of us here were until one day Jesus opened our spiritual eyes and we became a new creation, new eyes of faith in which to see the truth about Jesus and His words that set us free.

The only way to have your spiritual blindness healed is as **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4: 4** says; **through the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.**

If you are born again, what works are you doing for God?

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Introduction and Review:

John 5: 29

Miracle Healing or Mans Manipulation

Verse 1: A man born blind

Matthew 21: 14, Acts 3: 1 – 2, Isaiah 42: 7

Matthew 11: 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4: 4

Verse 2: Who sinned, this man or his parents

Exodus 20: 5, *Numbers 14: 18*

*Deuteronomy 5: 9, 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 21: 29*

*Jeremiah 32: 18, Ezekiel 18: 20*

Deuteronomy 24: 16, Luke 13: 1 – 5

Psalm 32: 1 – 5, Psalm 38: 1 – 8

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11: 29 – 30, John 5: 14

Verses 3 - 4: The works of God revealed

Ephesian 5: 16, Ephesians 3: 20, John 12: 35

Verse 5: I am the light of the world

John 1: 9, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4: 4

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