

“The Eye Opening Miracles of God”

John 9:1-41

Intro: Welcome.... [EYES CLOSED - FIRST PERSON TELLING THE STORY]

Vs 8-12 You would think this would be the greatest day in the man’s life! All of his life he had stumbled in blindness and begged for daily provisions. Now in an instant his vision of perpetual blackness is replaced with skies of blue, green grass, and wildflowers...he can see light, color, faces... his senses are overloading, and it’s glorious! But not every face that he sees is so excited. In fact, there are some people that are downright angry. What you would think is a day of community celebration quickly turns into a day of grueling interrogations... as this man is drilled for possibly hours on end about his healing and what he thinks about Jesus. Today we’re going to be a witness to 3 of these interrogations. After we see what’s happening in the story I’m going to make 4 inferences from the text about our faith. Here’s the big question I want you to wrestle with: **Have the miracles of God opened your eyes to faith in Jesus?** Look w/ me at **vs 13**.

Three interrogations of the man...(telling the story)

Vs 13-17 The neighbors of the man who had been blind now bring him to the Pharisees. We could hope their reasoning is to show how Jesus has miraculously healed the beggar from his blindness, but in vs 14 we see the real reason. John drops a crucial detail that turns this spectacular healing from celebration to controversy. Jesus has healed the man on a Sabbath. The Pharisees had amassed a plethora of legalistic laws that people had to obey on the Sabbath... 39 to be exact. One of those specifically said that people were not to knead dough on the Sabbath. Now Jesus wasn’t baking any bread, but he had spit on the ground and made a mud pie. During the interrogation the Pharisees discover this and some of them conclude, **“This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”** Who cares about the reason Jesus made the mud!? Who cares that God made the Sabbath for man and not man for the Sabbath!?

(Mark 2:27) If Jesus is helping people on the Sabbath, then he must be a sinner! And if he’s a sinner, then surely he can’t be God!! Amidst this ludicrous accusation there is a glimmer of hope. Some Pharisees put on their thinking caps and ask, **“How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?”** It’s a great question.. and at the heart of it is the purpose for Jesus’ miracles. If Jesus isn’t from God, how can he do such great things? Like the prophets before, God gave miracles to prove that the prophet's words were from God, and the miracles helped people to put their faith in God... by seeing his power and being overcome by his glory. Even this uneducated beggar knows this. That’s why he says, *“He’s a prophet”*. While he doesn’t fully get it yet, the blind man is siding with Jesus... He’s defending... He’s saying, *“All I know is only a man from God could do this!”* The Pharisees are dissatisfied with the beggar’s response and they desperately want to find a discrepancy in his story so they call in the man’s parents for the second round of interrogations.

Vs 18-23 Try to imagine for a moment that you have a child that was born blind. At his birth you agonized over that fact that he would never know the simple joys of seeing the ocean or taking in the wonderful colors of wrapped gifts under a Christmas tree. Throughout his life you helped him grope through darkness. Year after year you bandaged the bleeding knees for the countless times he stumbled over protruding rocks or cracks in the sidewalk. And it wasn't the extra work that really bothered you... you just wanted your son to have the gift of vision! Finally, one day he walks in and exclaims, *"Mom, dad, I can see!"* Tears flood down your face as he describes the miracle. In that moment, would you not walk over burning coals to thank the man who gave sight to your son? Yet look at their response (**read vs 20-21**). Not only does this beggar have to endure one of his first sights of his parents w/ troubled faces as they're grilled by angry Pharisees, but now he has to hear them lie and act as though they are ignorant to the miracle that has just given him sight. John gives the reason in **vs 22**. If they confess it was Jesus, the Pharisees could presume they believe Jesus is the Messiah. Excommunication would mean complete social rejection. It wasn't only that you couldn't go to church. You lose your job. Store owners wouldn't allow you to buy household goods. Friends pretend they don't know you. It meant becoming a complete outcast in their city. They aren't ready to cross that line, so they evasively give the ball back to their son. Instead of the miracles leading them to profess faith in Jesus, they cower to fear.

Vs 24-34 In the minds of the Pharisees *"giving glory to God"* would mean saying that Jesus is a sinner because he kneaded clay on the Sabbath, and the man refuses to do it. You can see his frustration growing... they want the beggar to tell them again how Jesus gave him sight, likely so they can find discrepancy in the second version and claim he's a liar, so he says, **"I already told you... why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"** You've gotta love the sarcasm there! He's made up his mind. He doesn't know everything, but he's holding tight to what he knows: *"I don't know if he's a sinner; what I do know is that I was blind, but now I see; I know that nobody in all of HISTORY has ever done anything like this before; I know that if this man wasn't from God he couldn't have done this; therefore, I know he MUST be from God!!"* And the Pharisees response? **"YOU'RE OUTTA HERE! You a stupid sinner. You are born into utter sin. You actually were sinning in your mother's womb (prenatal sin) and so God punished you with blindness. You're worthless, and you're not welcome to worship God anymore!"** So the Jews cast him out of the temple... but watch what happens next... the Lord of the temple found him. And he performs another miracle that is even greater than sight!!

Vs 35-41 The man who was once blind believes in Jesus and worships him!! Jesus tells him that was the reason that he had come into the world! That those who don't have spiritual sight may see, and those who think they're good enough to be saved without Jesus may be further blinded.

Four inferences about our faith (explaining and applying the text)

(1) We are all born with blind eyes - Each time he recounts the story he says, “*The Man made mud... told me to wash*”. The blind man did nothing to receive his sight. He wasn’t even calling for Jesus. He was just standing there begging. So it is with faith. We were like blind men and women, groping in the dark, and Jesus walked up, put his hands upon us and gave us sight!

(John 3:3-6; James 1:18) [TRACTOR] My aim in saying this is not to convince you of a specific theological system. My hope is that you will believe it so that you can properly worship! Until you get this it will be impossible to treasure God as you should b/c you are still crediting Salvation to your work. Like the little engine that could, you keep telling yourself, “*I think I can. I think I can.*” But you can’t! *Listen*, you did NOTHING to earn your spiritual sight. Because of God’s kindness to your pitiful state, he gave you what nobody deserves, so that you would worship him the way He deserves. Like a convict pardoned from death row, all you have left to do is say “thanks” forever!

(2) Coming to faith in Jesus is a journey - Before the beggar was healed, he didn’t believe in Jesus. After the beggar was healed, he still didn’t believe in Jesus. The journey of the beggar: **vs 11** - “the man” **vs 17** “a prophet” **vs 38** “Lord”. His conversion wasn’t immediate, but God was using the healing and each interrogation to bring the man closer to the point of conversion where he said, “*Lord, I believe*” and he worshipped. This is an important reminder for each of us who has someone in our life that we’re hoping will be saved. If God has foreordained to save them, he has also ordained the duration of His *effectual call*, and there is nothing in your power that will speed up his plan **[MY KIDS / BIRTHLINE]**. In this timeline, a woman cannot control the birth of her child... that’s not mother nature or the laws of gravity. That’s God. Likewise, you can’t control the salvation of your friends or children. Each person’s story is unique - sometimes it takes a miracle and other times it takes chaos. Jesus’ pursuit is always personal. (**VS 35** - “found him”)

(3) Belief will have repercussions - As God brought this man to the point of salvation, he was rejected by his neighborhood, he was accused by the Pharisees, he was let down by his parents, and he was kicked out of the Synagogue. Rejection by those you love as a Christian isn’t a possibility, it’s a promise (**Matt 10:34-36; Luke 21:17-19**). By enduring this hatred, we will gain our lives. *Has your faith created any opposition in your life?* **[YM - MIKE SMART]** Authentic faith will always face opposition - employers, friends, neighbors. When challenges like this come, will you respond like the beggar or like his parents? A growing faith makes us fearless, not fearful.

(4) If you think that you have 20/20 vision.. you’re still blind - Jesus summarizes what this whole miracle is about at the end of the story. He says, (**read vs 39**). God's purpose in coming into this earth was not to condemn sinners, but primarily and specifically to save sinners in a lost and dying world. What’s interesting though is that it’s not the bar fighting, binge drinking, pole dancing, or bank robbing people Jesus is condemning here... its the temple going, scripture

reading, tithe giving, law abiding, religious people that Jesus says are blind.

Why? Because they are so confident in their ability to please God by doing good and ridding themselves of sin that they don't come to Jesus for his help. Do you belong in that category today? Here's the litmus test straight from the text: *Do you spend more of your time on Jesus' team seeking to give sight to the blind, or more time on the religious team judging people? When you see sinners sin, are more of words spent seeking to give them sight or do they get spent interrogating or casting judgment?* When you think your vision is perfect, that is when your spiritual sight is the most blurred. If the gospel has touched your heart, you realize that only Christ's vision was perfect and the only life you can compare your own to is the life of the savior...

[Vs 37 "he worshiped him"] Are you really worshipping Jesus or just going through the motions? Outside of coming here once a week, do you really walk with Jesus? Do you really talk with him? When you see a sunset, are you thanking him? When good things happen, do you give the credit to him? When stuff is breaking, the kids are fighting, the creditor is calling, the world is crumbling... do you trust him? If the miracles of God have opened your eyes to faith in Jesus, you have nothing left to do but worship... every way, every single day. I invite you to worship him....