

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 9:27-34 | Our Response to Jesus
Sunday September 10, 2023

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 9.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

Last week, we studied the stories of two people.

It is interesting that Jairus and this unnamed woman—two entirely and totally opposite people—met at the feet of Jesus.

Jairus was a well-known wealthy religious man.

The woman was an anonymous poor and diseased Gentile woman.

He was a synagogue leader.

She worshipped man-made pagan idols.

Jairus' daughter had been healthy for 12 years.

The woman had been sick for 12 years.

As diverse as these two are—they have several things in common.

First, they came to Jesus because of their desperation.

They could not fix their problems on their own.

They were both scared—Jairus' twelve-year-old daughter died.

The hemorrhaging woman was probably depressed and thought about death a lot.

+ **LW KEYPOINT 1:**

Death changes everything.

Sooner or later, we all have to come to terms that we are going to die.

We have to come to terms that those around us are also going to die.

Sooner the better

If we never think about death, we'll freak out when tragedy strikes.

+ **LW KEYPOINT 2:**

Interruptions are divine opportunities to build faith.

When the hemorrhaging woman interrupted Jesus, Jairus didn't need Jesus to walk faster—Jairus needed more faith.

The Lord does the same thing with our schedules.

We tend to think that these people and problems are just getting in the way of our plans.

But the reality is that God has put difficult people and situations in our lives to grow us up—and to build our faith in Him.

+ **LW KEYPOINT 3:**

Faith itself does not do the healing— God does.

God chooses who He will heal and who He won't—regardless of what the prosperity preachers teach today.

The hemorrhaging woman wasn't healed by her faith —she was healed by the sovereignty of God—just like everyone else.

+ Gen 15:6 NLT - Abram believed the Lord, & the Lord counted him righteous because of his faith.

In other words, she believed the most famous verse in the world before the apostle John penned it:

John 3:16— *For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.* *↳ FAITH IS A GIFT.*

And we ended last week by discussing “Memento Mori.” —Remember death.

It is true that we’re all going to die someday, very soon—and yet it’s also true that Jesus never performed a funeral service.

He resurrected people from the dead.

He Himself was resurrected.

Spiritually speaking, Jesus will do the same for you if you believe.

You too, can pass from death to life.

INTRODUCTION:

For the past several months, we’ve been studying miracle after miracle in Matthew chapters 8-9.

Today, Matthew provides two more miracles for us to witness.

The interesting thing about these miracles is that Matt is the only one who writes about them.

The other Gospel writers don’t.

These particular miracles don’t have any details.

As we’ll find out—Matthew only reports the facts.

So one of the questions we must ask ourselves is, “What’s Matthew telling us?”

The short answer is that Matt seems to want us to focus on the response to the miracles rather than the miracles themselves.

Matthew is not downplaying the miracles—after all, a miracle is a miracle.

If what Jesus was doing were normal—they would be called “normalcals.”

So at the end of today’s story, we’ll see how the crowds respond one way, and the Pharisees respond another way.

Who’s right and who’s wrong?

More importantly, how are you going to respond today?

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God’s Word.

SCRIPTURE:

+ **Matthew 9:27**—As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

+ **Matthew 9:28**— When he entered the house, the blind men approached him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I can do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.”

+ **Matthew 9:29**— Then he touched their eyes, saying, “Let it be done for you according to your faith.”

+ **Matthew 9:30**— And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus warned them sternly, “Be sure that no one finds out.”

Matthew 9:31— *But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that whole area.*

Matthew 9:32— *Just as they were going out, a demon-possessed man who was unable to speak was brought to him.*

Matthew 9:33— *When the demon had been driven out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"*

Matthew 9:34— *But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons."*

These are the very words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

I am certain that I will see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living. (Psalm 27:13)

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 9:27—*As Jesus went on from there (Jairus' home), two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"*

So Matthew introduces us to two blind men who heard about Jesus' healing miracles.

In the OT, God's people were to be compassionate to the blind and deaf:

Leviticus 19:14 NLT—"Do not insult the deaf or cause the blind to stumble. You must fear your God; I am the Lord.

We are to fear the Lord because blindness or deafness could strike us, too.

Throughout the pages of sacred Scripture, much is said about blindness, deafness, hearing and speaking...

Examples:

-stuttered

Moses had a speech impediment—and when God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery, Moses didn't want to go.

Moses actually gets into an argument with God.

+ **Exodus 4:11 NLT**—Who makes a person's mouth? Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see? Is it not I, the Lord?

+ **Psalms 146:8**—The Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

Most of us know the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Think of the Sodomites knocking on Lot's door. They were "struck with blindness" (Genesis 19:11).

Or think of the Syrians who were attacking God's people—

+ **2 Kings 6:18**—Elisha prayed to the Lord, "Please strike this nation with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, according to Elisha's word.

Or think of Samson and how the Philistines gouged out his eyes, and he died blind. (Judges 16:21).

It's interesting to note that out of all the miracles in the OT, there is not a single instance when a prophet healed a blind man.

Fast forward to the Gospels, and blindness is the number one miracle that Jesus performs.

Why is that?

First, blindness was common in ancient times.

Second, healing the blind is prophetic from the OT.

Healing the blind was proof that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

How do we know?

Isaiah 29:18 NLT—*In that day (Messiah's day), the deaf will hear words read from a book, and the blind will see through the gloom and darkness.*

Isaiah 35:4 NLT—*“Be strong, and do not fear, for your God is coming to destroy your enemies. He is coming to save you.”*

Isaiah 35:5 NLT—*And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf.*

Isaiah 35:6 NLT—*The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!*

So the OT promised a Savior, and it's in the NT where the Savior is revealed.

But even God's most faithful men and women have doubts about Jesus' miracles.

John the Baptizer had doubts.

He was thrown in prison—has a lot of time on his hands to think—and started to doubt what he said about Jesus.

John doubts his calling and his ministry.

+ **Matthew 11:2**—Now when John heard in prison what the Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples

+ **Matthew 11:3**— and asked him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

In other words, “Jesus, was I wrong about you?”

+ **Matthew 11:4**— Jesus replied to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see:

+ **Matthew 11:5**— The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news,

+ **Matthew 11:6**— and blessed is the one who isn't offended by me.”

In other words— *John, no—you're not wrong.*

+ **Matthew 9:27**— two blind men followed him,

How is the possible?

Jesus told a parable one day, asking, “*Can the blind guide the blind? Won't they both fall into a pit?*” (Luke 6:39).

So, how are these blind men following Jesus?

They are most likely hanging on to one another.

Someone may be guiding them.

God our powers are weaknesses + disabilities.

Spiritually speaking, God does something supernatural when we choose to follow Jesus—think of it like a spiritual GPS.

+ **Isaiah 42:16**— I will lead the blind by a way they did not know;
 I will guide them on paths they have not known.
 I will turn darkness to light in front of them
 and rough places into level ground.
 This is what I will do for them,
 and I will not abandon them.

+ **Psalms 36:9**—By means of your light, we see light.

+ **John 1:9 NLT**—The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone,
 was coming into the world.

So, there are two blind men following Jesus. What do they do next?

They are not only following —

+ **Matthew 9:27**— calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

These men were continually calling out to the Lord.

These men were yelling at Jesus.

They were shouting and even screaming at Jesus to get his attention.

We may think that may be a bit rude? Why were they yelling and screaming?

Because of the crowd—crowds are loud.

Jesus still has a crowd following him.

It's probably a bigger crowd than last week because a few minutes prior, he just resurrected a twelve-year-old girl back to life.

+ **Matthew 9:27**— calling out, "Have mercy on us,

These men are begging for pity and compassion.

They are asking Jesus to show leniency and sympathy.

They are asking Jesus to show compassion because their lives are miserable.

They are begging Jesus for divine favor.

Jesus, have pity/mercy/compassion on us—body and soul.

How do we know that?

Matthew 9:27—“Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

This is the first time in Matthew’s Gospel that He is called the “Son of David.”

Jesus has many titles—Over 150 found in Scripture.

Titles are important. They describe who a person is.

This title—the Son of David— is significant.

These blind men are sending a signal to Jesus.

They want Jesus to know —that they know-- ~~that Jesus is much more than a descendant of King David.~~

something that the crowd doesn't.

Our Gospel writer, Matthew, opens his Gospel this way...

Matthew 1:1—An account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David,

And we say, “So what? What’s the big deal?”

The Jews recognized this title as a messianic title.

In other words, the blind men told Jesus they knew He was their Savior by using this title.

The “Son of David” was one of the most common Jewish titles for the Messiah.

It’s a royal title—these men know that Jesus is the King of kings.

? Savior of the world

Please note that Jesus did not stop them from using the title.

He Accepts it.

Matthew 9:28— *When he entered the house, the blind men approached him,*

That’s interesting—Jesus ignored these blind men as they called out to Him.

Jesus normally doesn’t do that. He usually stops and addresses the need.

It could have been a test—testing their determination.

Jairus and the hemorrhaging woman both were tested last week.

Both were desperate, and desperate people are determined.

Matthew 9:28— *and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I can do this?”*

This question seems strange— almost cruel, doesn’t it?

Despite being blind—these two men somehow managed to follow Jesus for who knows how long—working their way through a large crowd to reach Him.

Once they finally get to Jesus, Jesus asks this question.

Do you believe me? Do you believe in me? Do you trust me? Do you have faith in me?

His question draws out a public confession.

Matthew 9:28— *They said to him, "Yes, Lord."*

"Yes, Lord" should sound very familiar to us—

Romans 10:9—*If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

It's pretty ironic that although these two men are physically blind, they have a much clearer vision than most other people in the crowd.

The irony is pretty thick—these two blind men are the first to see both Jesus' royalty as King and his fulfillment as the Savior of the world.

Matthew 9:29— *Then he touched their eyes, saying, "Let it be done for you according to your faith."*

We all know that Jesus performs miracles.

But notice how he continually performs them.

He doesn't do it like today's so-called faith healers/prosperity preachers.

In fact, Jesus does the opposite.

He doesn't gather people and jump around and put on a performance.

Jesus doesn't work the crowd into a frenzy.

Jesus continually moves away from the crowds.

I also want you to notice what Jesus healed —leprosy, demon possession, paralysis, blindness, deafness, and even death.

What are today's faith healers healing today? Sprained ankles, runny noses, and there seems to be an epidemic of one leg being longer than the other.

Matthew 9:29— ~~Then he touched their eyes, saying,~~ "Let it be done for you according to your faith."

As we discussed last week, Jesus makes it clear that faith isn't necessary for him to heal someone physically.

Most of the time, Jesus healed people regardless of their faith in Him.

Last week was *Exhibit A* because Jairus' daughter didn't have any faith—she couldn't have faith. She was already dead.

Nonetheless, faith is always involved in salvation.

Faith is always involved when God brings someone from death to life.

Now, when Jesus says, "According to your faith"—that does not mean "in proportion to your faith."

And proportion is what the prosperity preachers sell...

In other words, it doesn't mean that Jesus heals their eyesight a little— if they have a little faith.

It also doesn't mean that Jesus gives someone a 20/20 vision if they have a lot of faith.

Jesus' miracles are not a quid pro quo deal— "so much faith equals so much sight."

Jesus is not a spiritual Ophthalmologist.

Jesus' miracles are so much bigger than a person's faith.

Well, Jesus did have mercy, pity and compassion on these men...



Matthew 9:30— And their eyes were opened.

We don't know if these men were born blind or if they lost their sight.

Regardless, can you imagine what it would have been like to see the face of Jesus at that moment?

These two men are staring at the face of God!

Can you imagine the celebration? Hugs? Jumping up? Down? Falling down to worship?



Matthew 9:30— Then Jesus warned them sternly, "Be sure that no one finds out."

Jesus asks one thing in return: their silence.

Jesus was not simply making a suggestion.

He doesn't want them telling anyone about this miracle.

Why would Jesus want these two men to keep their healing and salvation a secret?

Two things to consider:

First, It's not time to reveal Jesus' true identity.

Jesus knew that people would focus too much on the physical miracles rather than His saving message.

We do the same thing today.

People tend to focus more on the gifts than the Giver.

If too many people kept coming to Jesus only for miracles—that would have kept him from his teaching and preaching.

And His teaching and preaching were the primary elements of his ministry. (Mark 1:38).

KEYPOINT 1:

Jesus performed miracles so that people would believe His Gospel message.

Jesus' teaching and preaching were verified by the miracles.

When the Scribes & Pharisees taught — nothing happened.

Second, Rome had zero tolerance for other people who called themselves king.

From their perspective, there was no king but Caesar.

And they eliminated all threats.

Jesus knew that the Israelites were looking for someone who would deliver them from the power of Rome.

But, Jesus would not be forced to do something ahead of His Father's plan.

Here's the amazing thing—if the Jews had recognized Jesus as their Messiah, then Jesus would have been crucified by the Romans, not the Jews.

Regardless, Jesus came to die for the salvation of those who believe—but only in the Father's timing.

So Jesus tells these two men—*mum's the word*.

What'd they do? *v.31 — they did exactly what they were told.*

Matthew 9:31—*But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that whole area.*

They did the exact opposite of what their Lord just told them to do.

Just like a baby Christian, their obedience does not match their faith, and they tell everyone.

Obviously, relatives and friends could not be kept in the dark.

+ **Matthew 9:32**— Just as they were going out, a demon-possessed man who was unable to speak was brought to him.

+ **Matthew 9:33**— When the demon had been driven out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"

We don't know how Jesus cast out the demon.

Matthew's focus is on the response.

+ **Matthew 9:33**— and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"

The crowds are astounded.

They became amazed beyond amazement.

Good! But not good enough. At the very least, the miracles should have led them to believe ~~faith in Jesus~~.

We see time and time again how fickle crowds are.

Crowds seem to always be astonished and sometimes afraid, but never committed. Isn't that interesting?

After Jesus feeds the five thousand, what happens?

They start following Him!

Who wouldn't—it's free social security!

Best fish & chips ever!

John 6:26 NLT—I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs.

John 6:27 NLT—But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you.

Matt 9:33 — The crowds were amazed, saying ...
So, we see the crowd speak about Jesus.

But the Pharisees have another perspective—they now speak against Jesus.

We see the tension and build up of the Pharisee's hatred with their opposition to Jesus' forgiving sin.

The Pharisees go on to criticize Jesus for eating with "sinners."

With Jairus's daughter, the Pharisees laughed at him.

Here, they do the worst thing of all.

Matthew 9:34—But the Pharisees said,

If today's passage were a movie, we would start to hear dark, ominous music begin to play.

It reminds me of Genesis 3...*Now the serpent...*

What the Pharisees say next is the most wicked thing anyone could ever say.

They don't marvel, and they don't believe.

Now, keep in mind the Pharisees have seen multiple miracles.

They, having seen with their own eyes, Jesus healed the leper, the lame man, the blind man, *this demon-possessed man*.

And after being an eyewitness to all of it—

Matthew 9:34— *But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons."*

They could not deny the miracles themselves, so they chose to reject the true source of the miracles.

The reason that this statement is the most wicked thing a person could ever say is because they contribute the supernatural works of God to Satan.

This issue is going to come up again.

So, it's a statement that was common among the Pharisees.

Jesus deals with it teaching on the unpardonable sin—blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. (Matt 12:31).

And when Jesus deals it—it's a game changer for Israel.

Because it's then that Jesus blinds the eyes of the Pharisees to where they can't believe even if they wanted to.

Jesus also changes His teaching strategy—he teaches in parables to where the only people who understand are the Disciples.

PREACH:

Today's passage deals with our response to Jesus' miracles.

The reason for miracles is to validate what Jesus says is true.

Matthew gave us ten miracles in a row to prove that He is God.

It's almost as if Jesus said, "What do you need to see? What do you need me to do to believe?"

- Heal the blind? Check.
- Heal the deaf? Check.
- Cast out demons? Check.
- Heal the leper? Check.
- Raise the dead? Check.

What else could you possibly need

To believe?

What about Jesus being murdered for crimes He didn't commit and walking out of his grave after three days? Check.

Jesus has proved Himself time and time again.

Do you believe? If not, what's keeping you from believing?

If you do believe, what are you going to do w/ it?

Next week, we see a significant shift in the book of Matthew. Pharisees get fired, and now we have a replacement team—plan B—the Twelve tribes of Israel get replaced by the Twelve Disciples.

PRAYER

BENEDICTION

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)

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