

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

John 9:8-12

Part 2

This weekend, in an attempt to minister to our mothers and also in an attempt to minister to every Christian attending our services, I would like us to consider a very important question. How can we maximize our impact for Christ?

We can maximize our impact for Christ when we put God's work on *display*. And this is true whether we are a mother, a father, a brother, a sister, a parent, a child, a friend, or a neighbor. Why would this be?

Putting God's work on display provides us the greatest opportunity to point people to *Christ*.

This thought brings us back to our continuing study of **John 9:1-12**. These verses record for us four different aspects of a very extraordinary healing performed by Christ near the end of the Jewish festival known as the feast of booths. So what was the first aspect of this particular healing?

The first aspect of the healing in John 9:1-12 was the *problem* (John 9:1). Let me read for you **John 9:1. "And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth."**

Jesus, in this verse, most likely was traveling down a road outside the temple area filled with hundreds, perhaps thousands of people making their way either to or from the temple. In addition to these people there were individuals with chronic illnesses and other physical disabilities lining the roadside begging for alms. And amongst these beggars there was a man with a problem that Jesus was particularly drawn to. And what was his problem? He had been blind from birth. This is the first aspect of the healing in **John 9:1-12**. So was the second aspect of the healing?

The second aspect of the healing in John 9:1-12 was the *purpose* (John 9:2-5). Or in other words, the second aspect of the healing recorded for us in **John 9:1-12** was an explanation by Christ of why this man had been born blind. Let us quickly review why Jesus felt compelled to do this.

Apparently, after Jesus had come to a stop in front of this blind beggar and had focused His attention upon him, it moved the disciples to ask Jesus whether it was the sin of the blind man or the sin of his parents that had caused this man to be born blind. Let me read for you **John 9:2. "And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?'"**

This question, in light of rabbinic teaching, though very understandable was misguided, and this is what compelled Christ to explain to His disciples why this man was born with the problem that he had. And what was Christ's explanation? Let us read **John 9:3. "Jesus answered, 'It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.'"**

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Even before this man was born God had a plan and purpose for this man's life. And what was that plan and what was that purpose? It was that this man's blindness would provide the opportunity for His work to be displayed in him.

Our lives are not an accident, and the things that happen in our lives are not accidents. What does **Ephesians 1:11** tell us? It tells us that God **“works all things after the counsel of His will.”**

How many things? All things! Everything that comes into our lives whatever those things might be, whether they are good or bad, come into our lives for a reason. Even blindness? Yes, even blindness!

What is the reason why God permits the things that He does to come into our lives and the lives of others? Everything that God permits to come into our lives and into the lives of others is to provide an opportunity for the works of God to be put on display.

This is why we have been created. Our lives are not about us, but rather, our lives are all about Him, or in other words, our lives are all about the Lord of Glory and until we get this through our heads and into our hearts, we are going to live a very shallow and unsatisfying life.

But hopefully, once we get this through our heads and into our hearts, we will find ourselves being caught up as co-laborers with Christ in this wonderful and very satisfying mission of doing all that we can to display His works.

Unfortunately, we have a very little amount of time to do this. What do I mean by this? Listen to **John 9:4-5**. **“We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work. (5) While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”**

Jesus, after explaining to His disciples why this man had been born blind, talks to them about the urgency of them laboring together to display the works of God. There was an urgency to display the works of God because “night” was approaching, or in other words, death was approaching, and after death overtook them, their opportunity to be a participant in the mission of displaying the works of God would be over and their light would be extinguished, as His light would be shortly extinguished when He, in only a few months would be crucified.

The same thing is true for us. We have a very short period of time to work until the night overtakes us and our light, which we now enjoy in Christ, will also be extinguished.

What was the first aspect of the healing? The first aspect of the healing was the problem in **John 9:1**. What was the second aspect of the healing? The second aspect of the healing was the purpose in **John 9:2-5**. So what was the third aspect of the healing?

The third aspect of the healing in John 9:1-12 was the *power* (John 9:6,7). Jesus, after explaining to the disciples the real reason for this man's blindness, or in other words the purpose for his blindness, did something very unusual. Let us read **John 9:6-7**. **“When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, (7) and said to him, ‘Go wash in the pool of Siloam’” (which is translated, Sent).**

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So, what happened to this man after he washed his eyes in this pool? What did the verse say? **“And so he went away and washed, and came back seeing.”**

What an amazing demonstration of power. This man who had been born blind was now seeing. Or in other words, the work of God after these many years had now been displayed in Him. So, what will be the impact of all this? This question brings us to the fourth and final aspect of this healing in **John 9:1-12**.

My hope for this message is that we will come to better appreciate the impact our lives can have on others if we would simply take advantage of the opportunities the Lord affords us to put His works on display. And I would hope that this better appreciation would lead us to seek to display His work in us every moment of every day of our lives. So, what is the fourth aspect of this healing in **John 9:1-12**?

The fourth aspect of the healing in John 9:1-12 was the *perplexity* (John 9:8-12). The man who had been born blind had now been healed. So, what happened after he got back home? How did the people around him respond?

Let us read **John 9:8**. **“The neighbors therefore, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, ‘Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?’”** The predominant response of his neighbors and his acquaintances, it would appear from this verse, was one of perplexity, or in other words, puzzlement.

They knew what their senses were telling them and they were willing to accept what their senses were telling them, but it was not easy for them to do this because what their senses were telling them was beyond anything they had ever witnessed or experienced.

This struggle is reflected in the way they asked their question. **“Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?”** The question expects an affirmative answer, but it also acknowledges the amazing difficulty of making such a conclusion.

How difficult was it for some to except that conclusion? Let us read **John 9:9**. **“Others were saying, ‘This is he,’ still others were saying, ‘No, but he is like him.’”** The difficulty of them accepting the fact that this man was the same man who had been born blind was so great that there were some who dismissed the obvious, actually concluding that this was not the man at all but was rather only like him. This response demonstrates the magnitude of their perplexity. It was so perplexing that some were even able to embrace the absurd by denying the obvious.

What a funny scene this must have been and it is made even more comical as we read the last part of **verse 9**. **“He kept saying, ‘I am the one.’”** Who is the “he” in this verse? He is the blind man who had been healed. In the midst of all this hubbub, the blind man who had been healed was constantly declaring that he was, in fact, the very man that they had known.

Had the former neighbors and acquaintances been impacted by his healing? Had the former neighbors and acquaintances been impacted by this work of God that had been put on display in this man’s life? Absolutely!

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They had all been impacted. They had all been stirred up. Certainly we can safely say that no one was able to ignore him and what had taken place in his life.

When the work of God is displayed in a person's life, it will not go *unnoticed* (John 9:8-9). In fact, when the work of God is displayed in a person's life, it will stir people up. And it certainly will cause them to ask questions. Isn't this exactly what we see here in this story? Let us now read **John 9:10. "Therefore they were saying to him, 'How then were your eyes opened?'"**

Isn't this a reasonable question? Isn't this exactly what you would expect them to ask once they had come to the place where they were willing to accept the fact that this was indeed the man who had been blind from birth? This would have been the question that I would have asked. People observing the work of God in the life of another person will be moved to ask *questions* (John 9:10).

Why would this be? When God's work is put on display in a person's life, it is so spectacular in nature that it would be impossible for others to ignore, just as it was here in respect to the blind man. This is especially true when God's work is put on display in the life of a Christian. Why?

People observing the work of God in the life of a Christian will be moved to ask questions because that work is so *incredibly spectacular* (2 Corinthians 5:17). Let me read for you **2 Corinthians 5:17. "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."**

Let me ask you a question. What is a greater demonstration of God's power, the healing of physical blindness or making the followers of Christ new creatures? Making followers of Christ new creatures is far and away the greater demonstration of power. And when this power is put on display, it will provide a far greater challenge for people to explain than the healing of physical blindness.

Certainly this was true of the Apostle Paul. He was temporarily blinded and later received his sight through the intervention of Ananias, but it was not the healing of Paul's blindness that caused people to be stirred up nearly as much as something else. And what was that? It was his transformation, or in other words, it was the fact that he had become a new creature in Christ.

Listen to what was written about Paul shortly after his conversion in **Acts 9:21. "And all those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, 'Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests.'"** The whole direction of Paul's life had been dramatically transformed in a matter of moments. And this transformation of Paul's life was far more unsettling to people who had witnessed it or who had heard about it than the fact that he had earlier been physically healed from a temporary blindness.

Now let me ask you a question? Should we expect the transformation of every true disciple of Christ to be as spectacular as Paul's? No! Though we should not necessarily expect our transformation to be as spectacular as Paul's, it still should fall within the parameters of what people would consider *spectacular*. How could it not be if we by the grace of God have in fact become new creatures in Christ?

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I believe this has been true of my life. Coming to Christ and embracing Him as my Lord and Savior has totally transformed my life. I am certainly not perfected, but I can honestly tell you this weekend that everything in my life has changed since I committed my life to Christ. And I believe that this change is obvious, not only to me, but to others. I don't claim to be perfect, but I am certainly striving for Christ's sake to be all that He has called me to be and to do all that Christ has called me to do, and this certainly is far different than what I was like before I by faith embraced Him as my Lord and Savior.

Can you say the same thing about your life? Can you see the transformation that would be consistent with God's work of making you a new creature in Christ? I would certainly hope so. Not only for the Lord's sake, not only for your sake, but for the sake of the people that God has brought in your life. For the sake of your mother, father, brother, sister, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and on this mother's day, I can't help but mention your children. For their sake you need to do this. You need to shine the light of your life that you enjoy in Christ on their path.

When we as new creatures in Christ choose by God's grace to live as new creatures it will provide us with a great opportunity. It will stir people up. They will have questions about our lives and they will be interested in what we have to say. Certainly, the neighbors and acquaintances were interested in what the man who had been born blind had to say as he answered their question about how his eyes had been opened.

Let me read for you **John 9:11**. **“He answered, ‘The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, “Go to Siloam, and wash”; so I went away and washed, and I received sight.’”** Were they interested in what he had to say? Absolutely! Why? They were interested because they had seen the work of God displayed in this man's life.

CONCLUSION

Are you as a professing believer putting God's work on display in your life in such a way that when you point people to Christ that they will be interested in what you have to say?