

**John 9: 1-34; “He Put Clay on My Eyes”, Sermon # 54 in the series –
“That All May Honor the Son”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall,
on October 13th, 2019, in the Morning Worship Service.**

This story of the man who was born blind, being healed and saved from his sins, is something which we can all learn from. It is one of the most plainly declarative demonstrations, in all of the Bible, of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is God. These verses show us that He is the One through whom the Father created the world. All three Persons of the Divine Trinity participated equally in the creation of the world because God is one Essence. Even though He is one Essence, yet He subsists in three Blessed Persons. But here in this passage, we see Christ’s Divine Power demonstrated in a most amazing way. As Jesus and His disciples were passing by, they saw this man who was blind from his birth. And one of His disciples asked Him – “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” And Jesus answered and told them – “Neither this man nor his parents sinned”. Rather, He tells them that he was born this way in order that the works of God should be revealed in him. Our Lord then proceeded to perform the miracle of giving this man, who had never before been able to see, his physical sight. This miracle would, in turn, eventually lead him to savingly believe in Christ.

At this hour I would like to draw a parallel between what happened to this man, to what happens to all Christians when they come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. I want to show you that his being given physical sight is related your being given spiritual sight if Christ is doing a work in your heart. And we will also see that it was the Lord who gave this man something very special, after he received his sight. He was given great wisdom to be able to answer all of the questions given to him by those who saw what had been done for him. So, there is much for us to learn from this man’s being given his sight. And, I pray, as we hear these things related, that each of us will see just how strong and powerful the working of Christ and His Spirit are; enabling any believing person who receives their spiritual sight, to testify of what Christ has done for them.

A testimony to what the Lord has done for you spiritually is very much needed in our day, when so many people are either ignorant or skeptical of God’s sovereign creative power in the New Birth. Many people today think, that simply being religious in some personal way, is enough to save them from their sins and to come to know God. We shall see very clearly from this passage, that it isn’t. Indeed, a person must be born again to see the kingdom of God. Let me give you 4 observations concerning Christ and this man.

1st – I want to show you the Lord Jesus’ Divine knowledge of the condition of every man, and what He came to do for this particular man. (verses 1-5)

“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.” “And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ It is amazing how many people think, that if a person is born with a disability that blame must be assigned either to the parents or the person themselves for having this condition. Who was it who sinned; this man or his parents, Jesus’ disciples asked Him. But Jesus says that it was neither. Now, we need to understand that it is true, that we live in a fallen world, and that it was Adam’s fault that sin came into the world and ruined God’s good creation. It is true that Adam’s sin brought about the fall and all of the awful consequences that followed in its train; that is, the effects of death and the corruption of nature; not only man’s nature, but all of creation’s experience of the effects of sin upon it.

This is what certainly accounts for many of the awful things which come to people, in terms of their bodies not working right in some way or another. And, we must understand that these things most certainly can be congenital; that is, a person can be born with them, or that it happens to them even in the birthing process. We should not be surprised by these things, or think that such persons are unworthy of our attention or help, but rather, we should remember that even in the

effects of the Fall, and its consequences to all of nature, and all of mankind, that God is sovereign over all these effects and conditions of men, as well. God expects us to help and even take care of such people as the Lord Himself would have us to consider their great needs. The reason that I can say this is because, according to the truth of the Bible, God ordains all that takes place in creation in accordance with His sovereign will and purpose. He is intimately involved in the creation of every living thing and person, and the condition in which they come into the world. We know that this is true from the statement which God gave to Moses in Exodus chapter 4, verse 11.

You may remember the problem that Moses had, back there at the beginning of his ministry? God had come to Moses when he was on the back side of the desert; which place he had been in for 40 years, his having fled from Egypt after killing an Egyptian man there. That man was abusing one of his fellow Israelites. So he took matters into his own hands, and struck down the Egyptian, and hid his body in the sand. But the matter became known to Pharaoh and Moses had to flee Egypt. He supposed at that time, that the children of Israel knew that God had appointed him their deliverer, but they did not. And so he had to learn many things the hard way. After 40 years, God thought that he was ready. And so God revealed Himself to Moses in a burning bush; a bush which was on fire, but it was not consumed.

At that time He appointed Moses to speak to the children of Israel and to lead them out of their bondage in Egypt, and into the Promised Land. And Moses was rather shy about being called upon to be the Lord's spokesman. He said to the Lord in verse 10 of Exodus 2 – "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." And do you remember what the Lord said to him? He said – "Who has made man's mouth?" "Or who has makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind?" "Have not I, the Lord?" (Or – "Is it not I, the Lord?") "Therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you should say."

This statement of the Lord's, goes hand in hand with the answer which Jesus gave here to his disciples when He said – "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God may be revealed in him." You see, not all congenital defects and disabilities are due to a person's sin or their parent's sins. They all certainly come as a result of Adam's original sin in the beginning of the world. But as we look at people with disabilities, we need to think of something else as well. It may just be, as it was in this case, that it was God's purpose to create a person in just this way; in this case blind, so that the works of God would be revealed in him. God knew all about Moses' mouth and yet He would still use him to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt.

And this is what Jesus was saying to his disciples, here also. He is saying – This man is this way because God made him this way, and the reason is that he is going to glorify Me through the works that I purpose to do by showing the greatness of My power; to give him sight, which he has never had, and to use him to confound the false reasoning and false doctrine of the Pharisees. Just looking at this situation, we would say that this man born blind was a very unlikely candidate for fulfilling this purpose. But the Lord Jesus did not think so. Even so, we ought not to be fooled by appearances. God is able to do great things through any seemingly weak Christian person, because of the greatness of the power of Christ.

And so, right after Jesus said this, He then said to them – "I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work." "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." What does Jesus mean by saying He must work the works of God while it is day? He means that each person is given a certain time of life; a day as it were, in order to do what God would have them to do. Even the Lord Jesus, who was a Perfect Person in every way, had the responsibility before God the Father to use His time wisely. He knew that He had only so much time to accomplish what the Father had sent Him to do, and so He could not waste His time. I wonder, my dear brethren, if you look at life this way? The time of your life you should see as a day, and you are not exactly sure how long it will be. You hope that it will be a long life, but you do

not know. The night that is coming is the day of our death. The night is coming when no one can work.

After you die there will be no more working for you. You will rest from your labors and your works will follow you. Jesus then said – “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. This was the great mission that God the Father had sent Him into the world for; to shine His light, the light of perfect truth, the light of perfect righteousness, so that fallen sinful people might come to know God. The way that He would do this at this time, was to heal this man of his blindness. Now, you need to understand that there is a parallel here that the Lord would have you to understand, between the physical and the spiritual.

This man’s being born physically blind is meant to be a picture to us of the condition of all people born into this world, except for Jesus Christ. We are all spiritually blind from our birth. By nature, we come into this world spiritually blind, and unless God has mercy upon us, to give us spiritual sight in the New Birth, we will remain in that condition and never understand the meaning of life, or perceive spiritual things correctly at all. But the commission of the Lord Jesus and the commandment of the Father is eternal life. And so, this man who was born blind will represent all those elect sinners whom Jesus will bring to them, the gift of eternal life. This begins with His giving spiritual sight to a person.

2nd – I want to show you the Lord Jesus’ Divine Creative power in His doing of this miracle. (verses 6 and 7)

“When Jesus had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.” “And He said to him, ‘Go and wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which is translated, Sent).” “So he went and washed and came back seeing.” Now, when you think about it, this seems like a very unlikely means to bring sight to a man born blind; Jesus’ spitting and making clay, and anointing this man’s eyes with it. It would more likely be a means to further blind him, humanly speaking. Unless, that is, that you remember that it was the means that Christ chose to use. It was the Lord God who at the beginning of the world, formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Who was it who did this act of creating man at the beginning of the world? Well, the whole triune God was involved in man’s creation; it is surely true.

And yet, I believe that we can legitimately say that there was a very special sense, and a very personal sense, in which God the Son was the One who formed the first man out of the dust of the ground. The Father is spirit, and as such has no body. It is true that in the beginning, He spoke and it was done and He commanded and it stood fast, in the creation of the world. And it is also true that the Holy Spirit was very much involved as the 3rd Person of the Divine Trinity, in the creation of the world, for it says in Psalm 33, verse 6 – “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” But I am trying to show you that there was this very special sense in which God the Son as a Theophany, as a Theophanic Man, stooped down and formed clay and made the first man in the Beginning. He formed him and He actually breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. How personal is that? Well, it is very personal.

And then, a short time later, when Adam and Eve fell from their original righteousness, who was it who came walking in the garden in the cool of the day, looking for His lost creatures? Well, a spirit does not come walking in a created garden so that His footsteps are heard by those who are frightened by His presence. No, this was none other than God the Son temporarily taking on flesh, and manifesting Himself to them in this very personal form that they could actually see. I am saying to you that this is why the Incarnate Lord Jesus spat, and then stooped down and made clay and then placed this clay on this man’s eyes. He was going to give to him what he had all along been lacking so far, in living his life; he had no ability to see, because he had no faculty to be able to see. Jesus was declaring to this man, and to all who were watching, that He is the Creator God.

Let us as Christians always be careful, when we are speaking to other people around us, to declare and maintain this very important truth; that the Lord Jesus Christ is unique among men.

He is unique because He is the God-Man; two natures is one Blessed Person. He is unique; no other Man like Him. Let no one be deceived into thinking that the Lord Jesus was merely a prophet, or merely a Man. He was and is both. But at the Beginning of the world, He was the One through whom the world was made.

3rd – I want to show you the controversy that Christ’s doing this miracle brought to this dear man, which may also happen to you. (verses 8-29)

“Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, ‘Is not this he who sat and begged?’ ‘Some said, ‘This is he.’ ‘Others said, ‘He is like him.’ ‘He said, ‘I am He.’ ‘Therefore they said to him, ‘How were your eyes opened?’ ‘He answered and said, ‘A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ ‘So I went and washed, and received sight.’ ‘Then they said to him, ‘Where is He?’ ‘He said, ‘I do not know.’ Now you will notice, that after Jesus applied the clay to this man’s eyes, that He did not follow him to the pool of Siloam. The blind man evidently went there by himself and did what Jesus told him to do; he washed and he received his sight. When questioned, he explained that the Man Jesus was the One who applied the clay and gave him the instructions to wash. He followed those instructions and he received his sight. But no one of his neighbors, or others around him knew how this miracle had taken place.

Everyone who saw him noticed the change in him right away, and they start asking questions. By the way, if you follow Jesus’ instructions concerning your receiving spiritual sight, you too shall receive the ability to see spiritually. “He who hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me, has eternal life and will not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” (John 5: 24) Just like this blind man, Jesus Himself must take the initiative with you, and apply the “clay”, so to speak, to the eyes of your heart. You must hear the gospel and His word to you, but along with that word, there also must be a creative work which He will do, which will give to you the ability to spiritually see. You must be born again so that you can see spiritual things. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1st Corinthians 2: 14)

In every case, the work of grace which is done by the Lord Jesus in a blind sinner’s heart, is a work which is done by means of His Holy Spirit washing you. Unless you are born of water and the Spirit you cannot enter the kingdom of God. In Ephesians 5: 25 Paul says – “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.” Notice how the application of Christ’s redemption is directly related to His eternal and particular love for the Church. Christ gave Himself for the church so that He might redeem her in particular. This man did not even ask for this cure. He simply received it according to the mercy of Christ because he was one of God’s elect. And yet, even though this was true, it was also true that the gospel had to be obeyed if he would truly receive his physical sight. He himself had to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. Even so, we too, if we would truly see, we must deliberately wash ourselves, and begin to cleanse ourselves of all defilement of flesh and spirit, This is how a person begins to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

People around this man were astounded that he could see. They questioned whether it was the same man. But he declared to them that he was the same man who used to sit and beg for alms, and that he now could see. They asked him – Where was this Jesus who had healed him? He said that he did not know. And so they brought him to the Pharisees. And since it was a Sabbath day when Jesus did this miracle, the Pharisees asked him how had received his sight, and he told them what he had told the others. But right away some of the Pharisees said that Jesus couldn’t be from God, because He did not keep the Sabbath. They reasoned that people had to rest on the Sabbath day, not only from their six-day work, but even from all good works as well; works such as Jesus’ healing a man on that day. They thought that Jesus was breaking the Sabbath. But as Jesus said in another place – It is not unlawful to do what is good and right on the Sabbath day. It was a good work for Him to have healed this man on a Sabbath day, and it ought to have been done.

We need to see from this that some self-righteous men will go beyond the intent of the Sabbath commandment, and they will make it a great bondage and a burden for people to observe it, because of their man-made commandments that they add to it. The Pharisees said to the blind man in verse 17 – “What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?” “He said, ‘He is a prophet.’” Now, remember, the man who now had his sight did not know all that much about the Lord Jesus yet. He knew that a Man named Jesus had healed him. But how could he describe Him? And so he began by saying that Jesus was a prophet. He would begin there. And this is also where we should begin, in our witness to others. He is the One who has been sent from God to teach us the way to know God. He is the one who has done the miracle of giving us spiritual sight.

Let us understand that many people do not want to believe that it takes Christ opening their eyes to spiritually see. The Pharisees weren’t going to believe this, and so we find it being said in verse 18 that they did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. They said – “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How does he now see? His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes, we do not know.” His parents did not want to be put out of the synagogue, and so they said to the Pharisees, “He is of age; ask him.” So they again called the man who had been blind, and they said to him – “Give God the glory!” “We know that this Man is a sinner.”

You see how quickly these people wanted to draw wrong conclusions about Jesus in relation to what He had done for this man. He had done a marvelous good work, and yet they want to make Jesus out to be a sinner. People in our own day also want desperately to believe that it does not take a work of Christ’s grace to open their eyes to the truth, or His opening of their hearts so that they can respond to the truth. And so they speak against it. They will question what you, as a believer in Christ, now know to be true; that you were once spiritually blind, but now you see. If you are asked to explain your experience as a new Christian, what has happened to you, the only thing that you need to tell them is what this man told them – “One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.” By the way, this was the very thing that I myself said before I was baptized in Middle Park Lagoon, in Bettendorf, Iowa, in 1976. They asked me – Do you have anything to say about yourself in regard to your being saved? I simply said – I feel like the blind man in chapter 9, verse 25 – That once I was blind, but now I can see.

You see beloved, there may be many things that you do not understand about God’s truth when you first come to Christ, but this one thing you do know; that your spiritual eyes of your heart have opened to see and to receive, everything about the glory of what Christ has done for you. You know yourself to be the one who was so undeserving of His mercy; the Lord Jesus, the One who loved you so much that He was willing to go to the cross, and bear your shame there; the sin and the shame of your spiritual blindness, so that He could give you the gift of spiritual sight. O glory in this, dear believer; that though once you were blind, now you see. These people wanted to know more of how this man came to see. They said to him in a most skeptical way – “What did He do to you?” “How did He open your eyes?” He saw that their intent was to minimize the glory of Christ and His power; Christ and His grace. And so he wisely said to them – I told you already, and you did not listen.” “Why do you want to hear it again?” “Do you also want to become His disciples?”

Some people only want to hear of your testimony in order to find something to criticize. As those who have been touched by Christ and worked on by His grace, we also must be ready to receive this kind of interrogation concerning our confession of Christ. Many people will not want to believe what has happened to you. You have been born again by the Spirit of God! Christ has done great things for you and made you glad. But to unbelieving people around you, it is as if you have done something wrong in confessing the glory of the mercy, and the greatness of the grace of Christ which has come to you. In verse 28 it says that they reviled him and said, ‘You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples.’ “We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from.”

You see, here is the real issue with unbelieving but very religious people. They are disciples of Moses. They believe in themselves, and their own supposed righteousness. They believe that you are wrong to even ask whether they would like to be Christ's disciples. They will revile you. You have not graduated from the schools of the Pharisees. You will not acknowledge their theological system; that a person can supposedly be justified by their own moral good works. But you, dear Christian hold fast to what Christ has done for you. No moral good works done from a heart which is ever so good in a human sense, will ever measure up perfectly to the Divine standard. It is the Lord Jesus only, who fulfilled God's holy law. It was Jesus alone who suffered and bled and died, and offered Himself a suitable sinless sacrifice to God. Let us therefore learn to boast in the Lord Jesus always in relation to our salvation.

4th – I want to show you how this man gave God and Christ all the glory for his sight being given to him, even though the Pharisees cast him out of the synagogue for it.

(verses 30-34)

“The man answered and said to them, ‘Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from ; yet He has opened my eyes!’ “Now we know that God does not hears sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.” “Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.” “If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” “They answered and said to him, ‘You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?’” “And they cast him out.” Well, we see the works of God displayed in this man in that he was very bold with these hardened men. They had said that they did not know where Jesus was from and he says that they ought to know. God does not hear sinners; he knew that. If anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God hears him to answer his prayers.

That a Man would be given the power to heal a man who was blind from birth was an extraordinary thing! It had never been done before, and yet these men were so spiritually blind that they could not acknowledge it and give glory to God for it. Instead, they criticize this man who had experienced this great miracle performed upon him, for his attempting to teach them! They should have been ashamed of themselves. They stupidly remind him, as they thought, that it was his sin or his parent's sin that had given him his blindness in the first place; the blindness with which he was born. But they should have known better than to say something like that. They were not only wrong in their analysis, but they were also proud of their supposed knowledge. Let us determine not be like the Pharisees in any respect. Let us not come to the place where we set ourselves up as the judges of the brethren and judges of how Christ does His work through them.

Christ would do good works through you, dear Christian. And as you do them, you will find that there are people like the Pharisees, who are still around. They are people who believe that they are always right in their analysis, and because of the strength of their supposed knowledge, which is just earthly wisdom and a legal understanding of the commandments of God, they will speak evil of you for your helping people who have inherent weaknesses in their mind or body. They may even try to become your judge and jury and slander your good reputation because they think that they know better than you. They cast this man out of the synagogue, it says here. But do not let this deter you, dear Christian, for bearing witness to the glory of Christ. Let your light so shine before men that they will see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Let your testimony be of the glory of Christ. And you will be glorifying God by the things that you say and do.