

## Jesus Heals the Blind Man of Bethsaida

**Text:** Mark 8:22-26

### **Introduction:**

1. The Context: Review recent travels of Christ on maps.
2. This is one of two accounts of healing recorded only in the Gospel of Mark. The other one is Christ's healing of the deaf and dumb man of Decapolis (Mk. 7:31-37). Both have similarities. MacLaren writes, "Both of them have these points in common: that our Lord takes the sufferer apart and works His miracle in privacy; that in both there is an abundant use of the same singular means—our Lord's touch and the saliva upon His finger; and that in both there is the urgent injunction of entire secrecy laid upon the recipient of the benefit."
3. The miracles of Christ were a testament to His Messiahship.
  - a. Luke 4:18-19 *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to **preach** deliverance to the captives, and **recovering of sight to the blind**, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*
  - b. Luke 7:22 *"Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that **the blind see**, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."*
4. We will now study this healing and its Gospel implications under four headings:

### **I. His Conveying to the Lord (Vs. 22)**

#### **A. Their Compassion for this man (Vs. 22a)**

1. In both of Mark's unique miracles (7:31-37 & 8:22-26), the one in need was brought to Christ by others.
2. In Bible times, people with these sorts of conditions were often looked down upon as if they were that way on account of sin and therefore under God's displeasure. They would often be neglected and mistreated. But compassion moved these men beyond those prejudices to seek this man's healing.
3. Challenge: Are you reaching out to the lost? Do you have a love for the lost? Do you make any efforts to bring lost, blind sinners to the Saviour? Are you involved in the ministry of soul winning?
4. 2 Cor. 5:14-15 *"**For the love of Christ constraineth us**; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."* The word 'constraineth' is an "Old and common verb, to hold together, to

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press the ears together (Acts 7:57), to press on every side (Luke 8:45), to hold fast (Luke 22:63), to hold oneself to (Acts 18:5), to be pressed (passive, Luke 12:50; Php. 1:23). So here Paul's conception of Christ's love for him holds him together to his task whatever men think or say." (Robertson Word Pictures)

- a. The word 'constraineth' is translated 'throng' in Luke 8:45 – "And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude **throng** thee and press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me?"
- b. The word 'constraineth' is translated 'held' in Luke 22:63 – "And the men that **held** Jesus mocked him, and smote *him*" Paul was held in the grip of Divine Love

5. **David Brainard:** "I care not where I go, or how I live, or what I endure so that I may save souls. When I sleep I dream of them; when I awake they are first in my thoughts."
6. **Hudson Taylor:** "The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed."
7. **John Wesley:** "You have one business on earth – to save souls."

### B. Their supplication for this man (Vs. 22b)

1. 'beseech' = to beg, intreat, urge, exhort. The sought the Lord's healing touch for this needy man.
2. Romans 10:1 "*Brethren, my **heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.***" Note: Paul's prayer motivated by the desire of his heart. We will not pray much for souls unless we have much love for souls.
3. Challenge: Are you praying for the lost?

## II. His Condition for the Lord (Vs. 22)

This man was blind. Blindness is a picture of the sinners lost condition. There is...

### A. The Blindness of Sin

1. Ephesians 4:18-19 "*Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the **blindness of their heart:** Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*"
2. We are all born spiritually blind (Rom. 5:12) on account of sin. We are sinners by nature and by practice (Ecc. 7:20; Rom. 3:10-18, 23)

### B. The Blindness of Self-righteousness

1. Religion does not cure blinded eyes. In fact, it adds to the sinner's blindness! Consider the example of the Pharisees.

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2. Jesus said of the Pharisees, *“Let them alone: they be **blind** leaders of the **blind**. And if the **blind** lead the **blind**, both shall fall into the ditch.”* (Matt. 15:14)
  3. Christ denounced the blindness of the scribes and Pharisees 5 times in Matthew 23:
    - a. *“Woe unto you, ye **blind** guides”* (Vs. 16)
    - b. *“Ye fools and **blind**”* (Vs. 17)
    - c. *“Ye fools and **blind**”* (Vs. 19)
    - d. *“Ye **blind** guides”* (Vs. 24)
    - e. *“Thou **blind** Pharisee”* (Vs. 26)
  4. John 9:39-41 *“And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, **Are we blind also?** Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; **therefore your sin remaineth.**”*
  5. Challenge: The first step to being healed of spiritual blindness is to admit your blind condition and there is NOTHING you can do to cure yourself! See Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-6
- C. The Blindness of Satan** – *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath **blinded** the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”* (2 Cor. 4:3-4)
1. Satan uses religion to keep millions blinded to the truth. As someone put it, “Satan goes to church every Sunday!” Churches that preach a false Gospel are doing the work of Satan, not Christ.
  2. To be freed from Satanic blindness, the lost need a clear and bold declaration of the Gospel, not a hidden one!
  3. Consider Christ’s commission to Paul on the road to Damascus – *“To **open their eyes**, and to **turn them from darkness to light**, and from **the power of Satan unto God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”* (Acts 26:18)
  4. The Gospel has the power to open blinded eyes! (Rom. 1:16)

### III. His Cure by the Lord (Vs. 23-25)

This is the only recorded miracle where the healing was in stages.

MacLaren: “As a rule, faith in His power to heal was a condition of Christ’s healing, and that mainly because our Lord would rather make men believing than sound of body. They often wanted only the outward miracle, but He wanted to make it the means of insinuating a better healing into their spirits.” There was...

#### A. An Awakening Touch (Vs. 23-24)

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1. Christ's dealings with each sinner is specific and unique. This man was touched at least three times by Christ.
  - a. The *first* touch: Christ takes him by the hand and leads him out of the town. What tenderness and love Christ demonstrated to this man. What a picture of salvation! We are drawn out of our old life and separated unto Christ.
  - b. The *second* touch: Christ spits in his eyes and puts his hands upon his eyes. With this touch, came a partial restoration of sight.
  - c. This pictures the pre-salvation workings of God in the heart of the sinner to illuminate them to the light of the Gospel. At this stage, the Gospel light has begun to penetrate the sinner's darkness but he hasn't come yet to full faith and understanding yet. For a sinner to get saved, they need the Lord's touch, often multiple times, to bring them finally to the salvation moment.
  - d. Illustration: Lydia – *"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: **whose heart the Lord opened**, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."* (Acts 16:14) 1. Her heart was opened by the Lord (pre-salvation work). 2. She heard the Gospel through the Apostle Paul and was converted (salvation moment).
2. Note: It is important that we as soul-winners seek to discern where the sinner is at. Is he truly ready to receive Christ or still in the early stages of being awakened to the Gospel?
3. H.S. Paisley: "Similar experiences may be known to soul-winners, who meet some at the time of their conversion, who may be unclear in their spiritual perception, but later as a result of instruction have clear spiritual enlightenment."

### B. A Saving Touch (Vs. 25)

1. "put his hands again upon his eyes" = Christ touches his eyes for the second time
2. 'restored' = to restore to its former state
3. Isaiah 42:6-7 *"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; **To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.**"*
4. John Wesley: Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night; thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke the dungeon flamed with light. My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose went forth and followed thee.

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5. John Newton: Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, twas blind but now I see.

### IV. His Command from the Lord (Vs. 26)

#### A. The Reason

1. Christ was seeking to discourage the tendency of the crowd to respond to miracles like this with attempting to make Him a political Messiah. As a general rule, Christ did not publicise and promote His miracles!
2. Bethsaida had also been denounced by Christ for its stubborn unbelief (Matt. 11:21) so it seems the Lord will now not give them any further public demonstration of His power.

#### B. The Response

1. As far as we can tell, this man obeyed the command of Christ.
2. We are saved to a life of obedience! Just about every time you read of a healing like this, the first thing Christ does after the healing is gives the individual a command.

### Conclusion:

1. Will you come to Christ today to be healed from the blindness of your sin? Will you let Him touch your eyes?
2. What are we doing to bring blinded sinners to Christ? Are we like the majority of Christ's day who didn't care about the blind or worse still, utterly despised them? Or are we like those few who cared enough to bring them to Christ.