

THE MASTER'S MESSAGE SERIES

JOHN-51

BLIND EYES MADE TO SEE BY JESUS

The world according to Jesus is divided into two groups:

- o those that are in darkness, the spiritually blind and
- o those that have sight, the spiritually seeing.

There are only two kinds of people. There's no half sight. There are no partially blind. You either see or you are totally blind. As the country preacher put it once, " there's only two kinds of people in the world, the saints and the aints, and that's all!"

Now this entire issue of blindness and the entire issue of sight is really what governs chapter 9 of John.

So as we open to John chapter 9 we open to the 6th of the 7 special sign miracles. At the end of chapter 8 they are trying to stone Christ to death. Chapter 9 open right after that as Jesus passed by the entrance to the Temple, He sees this particular blind man. And then one of the greatest miracles in all of the scriptures happens. He heals him. That's the story. What is the message? After healing his eyesight, Jesus heals his soul.

Remember we learned that each of these 7 sign miracles is Christ is presenting¹ Himself as God in human flesh. He's presenting Himself as the Messiah, the Savior of the world, God incarnate. And this is the burden of John's message. This is what John the Apostle is doing in this whole gospel. He is presenting the deity of Jesus Christ. On every page it is Christ is God, Christ is God, Christ is God, Christ is God relentlessly, tirelessly, constantly.

And remember that Isaiah prophesied that Messiah would give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, and healing to the lame (Isa. 29: 18; 32: 3; 35:5-6). When John's disciples came to inquire of Jesus, He reminded them of these prophecies and applied them to Himself (Matt. 11: 4-5). The miracles that Jesus performed were attestations to His deity. But to really grasp the wonder of this miracle make some observations:

- o That blind man couldn't have seen Jesus. No way, couldn't see Him. He wouldn't have known if Jesus had walked right by him. Wouldn't have had any idea about it.
- o God's grace dominates this whole miracle. It isn't this man running to Jesus saying, "Oh! Heal me, heal me!" No, Jesus saw him, and see that's the way grace is, isn't it?
- o It's Christ seeking us. We could not see Him except He saw us. We are blind, we're absolutely blind. We have no capacity to see God. We have no capacity to see

¹ From a transcript of John MacArthur tape GC 1525 JESUS OPENS BLIND EYES" John 9:1-12.

Jesus Christ. We are incapacitated, we are stone blind, spiritually speaking. We can't see.

Now here is the most precious, striking, and beautiful truth from this whole account - **Jesus had time for this blind man.** Remember the circumstance?

- o Jesus is running for His life. Running to get away from being stoned. But Jesus never too busy to stop, to gather up a blind sinner, and bring him along.
- o If we found ourselves running away from being stoned, I don't really think we'd stop to share the truth with anybody. I think I'd be hightailing it so fast there'd be a cloud of smoke. Not Jesus. He was threatened with His life but He had time to stop and give sight to a blind man. And you know what, He just kept on going. But the blind man finally found Him, again. And He gave sight to his soul.
- o You know, it reminds me of Jesus on the cross. Jesus was dying on the cross, bearing the sins of the world, the whole sin of the world, on the sinless Son of God. Talk about problems. Talk about the guilt, the shame. And so unoccupied with His own problems, that He was hanging there on a cross, gathering into His arms a dying thief to carry along to paradise with Him that same day. That's always the way Jesus is, isn't it? Always concerned about the one who needs.

Please stand with me this morning, and follow the scene as Jesus heals the man born blind as we read John 9.

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (9:5). This directs us back to the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles, and that was to become the foundation for what Jesus was to do. After He had made clay from saliva and applied it to the beggar's eyes, He sent the blind man away with specific instructions. "And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing" (9:7). Siloam was, you will recall, the place where the priest bearing the golden pitcher dipped up the water that so significantly portrayed God's spiritual and physical supply for His land and people. The pool was now to be crowned with the distinction of being associated with Jehovah's Sent One as an affirming sign to Israel. The themes of water and light would coalesce in a pointedly literal fashion as the blind beggar groped to the water's edge, knelt, and applied the cool liquid to his sightless eyes. Slowly, he lifted his head, tiny droplets beading on brows and beard. He opened his eyes and a torrent of light flooded his being. Water and light mingled together as the man blinked away the watery mist and light began to clarify objects, faces, reflections. Jubilantly, he rose to his feet as curious onlookers marveled at what they had witnessed—a man came to the pool blind, had washed, and walked away seeing!

Immediately, the beggar became the subject of an inquiry. Questions were posed by friend and Pharisee. "Is not this he that sat and begged?" (9:8). "How were thine eyes opened?" (9:10). "What sayest thou of him, seeing he hath opened thine eyes?" (9:17). "How then doth he now see?" (9:19). In the end three indisputable facts were established:

1. *He was indeed the man born totally blind.* This was substantiated by the witness of the neighbors, "This is he" (9:9); by his own admission, "I am he" (9:9), and by

confirmation from his parents, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind" (9:20).

2. *He now possessed full faculty for sight.* "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (9:25).
3. *Jesus Christ gave him his sight.* "A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight" (9:11).

Details of the miraculous occurrence could be questioned, but the miracle could not be denied. His work stood in confirmation of His message. 2

JESUS did the WORKS OF GOD

Work of Jesus	Work of God
Stilling the storm (Matthew 8:23–27)	Psalm 107:29
Healing the blind (John 9:1–7)	Psalm 146:8
Forgiving sin (Matthew 9:2)	Isaiah 43:25; 44:22
Raising the dead (Matthew 9:25)	Psalm 49:15
Feeding the 5,000 (Matthew 14:15–21)	Joel 2:22–243

Miracle	Millennial Significance	Prophecy
Water to wine (John 2:1–11)	Joy, gladness	Isaiah 9:3, 4; 12:3–6
The 5,000 fed (Matthew 14:15–21)	Prosperity, abundance	Isaiah 30:23–24; 35:1–7
Walks on water (Matthew 14:26)	Environment change	Isaiah 30; 41
Catch of fish (Luke 5:1–11)	Abundance: authority over animal world	Isaiah 11:6–8
Storm stilled (Matthew 8:23–27)	Control of elements	Isaiah 11:9; 65:25
The blind healed (Matthew 9:27–31)	No physical or spiritual blindness	Isaiah 35:5
Raising the dead (Matthew 9:18–26)	Longevity; no death for believer	Isaiah 65:20

Sign	Significance
Water changed to wine (2:1–11)	Quality
Healing the nobleman's son (4:46–54)	Space
Healing man at pool (5:1–18)	Time
Feeding the five thousand (6:1–14)	Quantity
Walking on the water (6:16–21)	Nature
Healing the blind man (9:1–41)	Misfortune
Raising Lazarus (11:1–44)	Death

This story is as good an illustration of sin as there is anywhere in the New Testament. Because it's that character of blindness that makes total incapacity to see that so aptly describes spiritual blindness.

We cannot recognize God; we cannot recognize truth; we cannot recognize Christ. We are blind to spiritual reality.

Blindness has always been a picture of spiritual darkness. And just like this man who was at the mercy of Christ, who saw him, so the sinner is at the mercy of Jesus Christ who comes over and lovingly and graciously says, "I'll touch your eyes and make you see."

2 McQuaid E., *The Outpouring: Jesus in the Feasts of Israel*, (Bellmawr, New Jersey: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc.) 1997.
 3 Enns, Paul, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press) 1996.

The Bible makes an issue out of blindness, both physical and spiritual. In fact, of all the kinds of miracles that Jesus did, healing the blind is the most mentioned. He healed one deaf and mute, He healed one person with a fever, two times He healed groups of lepers, three times He dealt with raising the dead, but five times Jesus, by His power, healed blind people.

In Second Corinthians 4: 3-4 Paul says the God of this age has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine unto them. And then Paul says, "But we preach Jesus, who comes and opens blind eyes." You see the blind man can't find anything. He couldn't recognize Jesus if Jesus was standing in front...He has no capacity. So it is with the sinner. So it is with the man apart from God. He has no capacity to see God. He has no capacity to see Jesus Christ. He has no ability to recognize Him if He's right in front of him.

The Apostle Paul also writing to the Colossians (1: 13) said this, "Giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." The only people who know light are those who know Jesus Christ, for His is the kingdom of light.

We did not seek Him. He sought us. We had no capacity to even behold His glory. He had to reveal it to us by His own touch. That's how grace works. Lost man, blind, sees no God, sees no Christ, sees no truth, sees no love, sees no anything and Jesus comes along and looks at that blind man with compassion in His heart, with love in His heart, comes over, offers grace and spiritual life and light to that man and that's sovereign grace. He must give sight for we could not see Him in our sinfulness. Sin is a blinding thing.

The first three signs show <u>salvation's reception</u> by the believer; The seven signs also show our pitiful and hopeless condition.	
1. HE TURNS water into wine (2: 1-11)—Christ's salvation is ALWAYS MIRACULOUS;	We have no wine (2:3) which points to us as total strangers to the Divine Joy of God.
2. HE HEALS the nobleman's son (4: 46-54)—Christ's salvation is ONLY BY FAITH;	The sickness of (4:46) the son points to our disease that has made us incurably ill.
3. HE HEALS the paralytic (5: 1-9)—salvation is BY GRACE ALONE;	The helpless man by the pool (5:7) is a stunning picture of our helplessness to better our condition in God's sight.
THE LAST FOUR SIGNS SHOW <u>SALVATION'S RESULTS</u> IN THE BELIEVER;	
4. HE FEEDS the 5,000 (6: 1-14)—salvation brings INEXHAUSTIBLE SATISFACTION;	The multitude without food (6:5) is a graphic reminder that we are starving and destitute of anything that can truly feed our souls.
5. HE STILLS the storm (6: 16-21)—salvation brings COMPLETE PEACE;	The disciples in danger of life on the storm (6:18) tossed sea is a reminder that we were all born on the "broad road" leading to destruction.
6. HE HEALS the blind man (9: 1-7)—salvation brings LIGHT TO OUR SOULS;	The man blind from birth (9:1) is a picture of us who are incapable of seeing either our own wretchedness or the only One who can save us.
7. HE RAISES Lazarus (11: 38-45)—salvation brings the power of an ENDLESS LIFE;	Dead Lazarus (11) is a solemn declaration of our worst enemy – death. Nothing is more hopeless than the fact that no one rich or poor, wise or foolish, powerful or powerless are all utterly helpless to stop death. No one has survived death except ONE!

Welcome to the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

The Master's Message In John is watching Jesus through the eyes and ears of the Apostle John. We are doing this study because Jesus is the One who sent us to go and preach His gospel.

Jesus is the best One to summarize the message He wants us to share in His name. What is the Gospel? Christ Jesus answers through the eyes and ears of the Apostle that He loved – John.

John has over 20 powerful scenes where our Lord Jesus Christ explains the truth about salvation, and identifies those who are saved. We have come to the third of 26 beautiful moments in Christ's Ministry.

John captures Jesus describing believers as those who:

1. Possess Jesus Christ (1.12);
2. Understand salvation is only by substitution (1.29);
3. Have been overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit (1.33);
4. Hang on to Christ alone (2.11);
5. Get to start life over again –only this time brand new and in the right way with no wrath of God to ever fear (3.1-36);
6. Worshipers who drink the water of life because they are convinced that Christ is their only hope (4.1-42);

14. A BELIEVER WORSHIPS JESUS BECAUSE HE KNOWS HE WAS BLIND AND CHRIST GAVE HIM SIGHT John 9: 35,38-39,41 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. 39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." 41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

Remember this is the sixth of seven special miracles recorded in John's Gospel as witnesses to Christ's deity (20:30–31). The first three signs show how a person is saved: miraculously (water to wine), by faith (healing the nobleman's son), and by grace (healing the impotent man). The last four signs show the results of salvation: satisfaction (feeding the 5,000), peace (stilling the storm), sight and light (healing the blind man), and life (raising Lazarus).

First this blind beggar is a beautiful portrait of lost sinners.

1. **THIS MAN WAS TOTALLY BLIND** (Eph. 4:18; John 3:3; 2 Cor. 4:3–6). The unsaved, though intellectual like Nicodemus, can never see or understand spiritual things. Remember 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 But 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. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.
2. **THIS MAN WAS UTTERLY A BEGGAR**. In God's sight all lost people are impoverished, though perhaps rich in the eyes of the world. They go through life begging for something to satisfy their deepest needs. Isaiah 64:6 But we are all

like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

3. **THIS MAN WAS COMPLETELY HELPLESS.** He could not cure himself; others could not cure him. Ephesians 2:5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Secondly the way Jesus healed this blind beggar demonstrates how we are saved.

1. **Jesus found the blind beggar – that is grace.** Christ could have passed him by, for it was the Sabbath and He was supposed to rest (v. 14). While the disciples argued about the cause of the blindness, Jesus did something for the man. **SEEK AND SAVE LOST**
2. **Jesus made the blind beggar want to be clean – that is conviction.** A speck of dirt irritates the eye; imagine how cakes of clay must have felt. But the dirt in his eyes encouraged him to go wash. It is just so with the preaching of the Word: it irritates sinners with conviction so that they want to do something about their sins. (See Acts 2: 37.) **LOVE DARKNESS, NOT COME LEST REPROVED, CONVICT OF SINS KNEW HEARTS**
3. **Jesus created sight for this the blind beggar – that is regeneration.** The man proved his faith in Christ by being obedient to the Word. "Religion" today wants to give men substitutes for salvation, but only Christ can deliver from the darkness of sin and hell. **SONS SETS FREE**

Finally, the results of the blind beggars healing show what the results of salvation should be.

1. **God should get the credit.** The blind man's friends praised God The cure glorified God. All true conversions are for God's glory alone. See Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; 2:8–10. **NOT DO MY WILL**
2. **The person should be changed.** The cure was noticed by others. His parents and neighbors saw a change in his life. So it is when a person is born again— others see the difference it makes (2 Cor. 5:17). **SEE GOOD WORKS ND GLORIFY**
3. **Their life should become a witness.** It would have been easy for the son to hide his confession and thus avoid controversy, but he fearlessly stood his ground. He knew what a difference Christ had made in his life, and he could not deny it. Everyone who has met Christ and trusted Him should make it known openly.

Now how did this blind man go from blind, lost, and hopeless to salvation? That is the beauty of this chapter, it shows this man's progress toward Jesus. Have you ever noted the big picture?

Note carefully how this man grew in his knowledge of Christ, there are four stages in his pilgrimage toward Christ.

1. FIRST HE SAYS JESUS IS A GREAT MAN. "A man called Jesus" (v. 11) was all he knew when Christ healed him. He began by calling Jesus a *man*. "A man that is called Jesus opened mine eyes" (verse 11). He began by thinking of Jesus as a wonderful man. He had never met anyone who could do the kind of things Jesus did; and he began by thinking of Jesus as supreme among men.
2. NEXT HE DECIDES HE MUST HAVE BEEN SPECIAL SO HE CALLS HIM "A PROPHET" (v. 17) when the Pharisees questioned him. He went on to call Jesus a *prophet*. When asked his opinion of Jesus in view of the fact that he had given him his sight, his answer was: "He is a prophet" (verse 17). Now a prophet is a man who brings God's message to men.
3. THEN HE GROWS IN HIS CONVICTION AND SAYS JESUS WAS "A MAN OF GOD" (vv. 31–33). "It is a tremendous thing about Jesus that the more we know him the greater he becomes. The trouble with human relationships is that often the better we know a person the more we know his weaknesses and his failings; but the more we know Jesus, the greater the wonder becomes; and that will be true, not only in time, but also in eternity".⁴
4. FINALLY HE ARRIVES AT THE COMPLETE TRUTH AND CALLS JESUS "THE SON OF GOD" (vv. 35–38). This was his final and complete confession of faith. (See 20:30–31.) Finally the blind man came to confess that Jesus was the *Son of God*. He came to see that human categories were not adequate to describe him. This reminds me so much of God's Word in Proverbs "The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day," states Prov. 4:18 (NIV), and this man's growth in "light" proves it. A Christian is one who **has light in his heart** (2 Cor. 4:6); **who is a light in the world** (Matt. 5:14); who **walks in the light** (1 John 1) and who **produces the fruit of light** (Eph. 5:8–9). The man's "Lord, I believe!" was the turning point in his life.

Always remember the same Sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay. The same light that leads one person can blind another (vv. 39–41). The Pharisees admitted that they could see, and therefore they were guilty because they rejected the evidence and would not receive Christ. The Gospel brings about different reactions from different kinds of hearts: the blind sinner receives the truth and sees; the self-righteous religious person rejects the truth and becomes even more blind spiritually. It is a dangerous thing to reject the light.⁵

Why did Jesus⁶ send him to Siloam? Oh, that I do know. Siloam was a little pool, not that little, pool, inside the southeast wall of the city. Hezekiah had set it up because they were afraid of siege. There was a spring called the Gihon Spring, or the Virgins' Font, up on the temple mountain, the hill of the temple. Well, in order to assure water in the city in a siege, you know, they'd cut off all the water coming into the city, Hezekiah had built an aqueduct, a tunnel running the water from the spring up on the

⁴Barclay, William, *Daily Study Bible Series: The Gospel of John - Volume 2 Chapters 8-21 (Revised Edition)*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press) 2000, c1975.

⁵Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books) 1992.

⁶ From a transcript of John MacArthur tape GC 1525 JESUS OPENS BLIND EYES" John 9:1-12.

hill where the temple was right down into the pool of Siloam so they'd always have a water supply in the event of a siege. The Old Testament name for that pool was called "Shiloah," which now has been called Siloam in the Greek. Shiloah and it meant "Sent." And sure, from the temple hill the water was sent and this was the sent water. Now watch this one, the temple hill was a place where God was represented, right? So naturally Siloam represented that which was sent from God, represented Him of His blessings. And so Jesus is saying go wash in Siloam, the water sent by God, that will cleanse your eyes.

You want to know something? And if a man wanted to see in his soul he'd have to go to the one true Siloam, the one true sent from God who was none other than Jesus Christ. You see the beautiful symbolism in Siloam? Siloam, boy, the waters that came from the temple of God, Jesus was the living water who also came from God. He is the perfect Siloam. And so He tells the man to go wash in the pool of Siloam, a beautiful symbolism it is. And when he went to wash in Siloam, a deeper meaning was there, the spiritual cleansing that one must have when he goes to the true Siloam, the true spring of water pouring forth from God who is none other than Jesus Christ the one sent from God. Those waters that flew...flowed down from the temple hill, those waters that cascaded down into the pool of Siloam were regarded as symbolic of Messiah in Isaiah chapter 8, even Isaiah makes that characteristic comment about these pools that they symbolize Messiah flowing from God, and here He is...Jesus Christ.

One other time He identified Himself with Siloam and that time was in John 7, remember when He stood up on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles and they were going through the ceremony? And they had scooped the water out of the pool of Siloam and they were pouring the water over the altar and just at the moment they were pouring the water while everyone was around, Jesus stood up and said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me." You know what He was saying there? He was saying that's Siloam water, I'm the true Siloam..the true sent one with the water of life. And so the symbolism of going to Siloam is beautiful.

The main lesson is this, have you met the true Siloam? Have you met this Christ? The true light who lights not only the eye but the soul. Listen, He made your eyes. He lit them when you were born. That's right. You see because of Jesus Christ. All things were made by Him, without Him was not anything made. He made your eyes. He put the light in your eyes. And He wants to put the light in your soul. The ever-sensitive Jesus is passing by today...passed by you. You didn't see Him, maybe, He saw you. Maybe He reached down and anointed your eyes and in sovereign grace He said I'll give you sight if you'll obey My Word and go and wash. You see, that's the response of faith, isn't it? If Jesus has touched your eyes this morning, how did you respond? Are you saying, "Lord, I'll wash, I believe?" Did He touch your eyes? Do you see? If you don't, you can.

A little⁷ while later the Bible says, "And Jesus found him in the temple." Jesus went after the man because He had only begun the work with the physical healing, He went to the temple and met him and talked to him about his soul. And He does the same thing right here. By divine initiative He healed the blind man. By divine initiative He sought him out.

⁷ From a transcript of John MacArthur tape GC 1527, "SPIRITUAL SIGHT OR SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS?" John 9:35-41.

Jesus does the seeking, not you, not me. You can't begin to seek God until God has already sought you and revealed Himself to you. Then when you seek, you only seek to experience all that He has already sought and revealed to you. The physical miracle and the spiritual miracle were both divine initiative.

But then the other side of the coin is in verse 36. Sight not only rises in divine initiative, but it requires faith. It's not all of God. We're involved. And verse 36, there's the human side of it. Sure, salvation comes from divine initiative. Spiritual sight comes from divine initiative and God's ability to give it. But we must respond. That's the balance of salvation. Look at it, verse 36. "He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" Boy, I like that, that is really terrific. That is outstanding. That man is really right there. He is one of the most prepared people I've ever met. That guy is so ready for salvation, it's just a matter of "Lord, what do I do now?" he is literally a little ball of faith waiting to stick somewhere. He just wants to know where do I attach. That's all.

Jesus looked for the man. As Chrysostom put it: "The Jews cast him out of the Temple; the Lord of the Temple found him." If any man's Christian witness separates him from his fellow-men, it brings him nearer to Jesus Christ. Jesus is always true to the man who is true to him.

Listen, my Christian⁸ friend, let me put it as simply as I can. Clean your life up, get the garbage out of your life, shape it up. Get the sin out, the worldliness, the compromise, stop wasting your time flirting around with the world, there's no place in this Christian life for the things of the world. And Jesus Christ says it today, get busy and take hands with Me and work for it's day and night's coming and it's coming fast. So many Christians are so preoccupied with making money and entertaining themselves and exalting their ego and doing the things they want to do and others are so lazy and slothful in doing nothing and Jesus is saying the same thing, He's saying let's get together and do the works of God. Listen, you don't...you haven't even begun to tap, and neither have I, what God can do through us if we let Him. Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think according to the power that worketh...where?...in us." There is power there to do the unthinkable. Power there to do the miraculous. And most of us piddle around doing nothing. And Jesus comes along and says we must work, we must work, put your hands in the hands of Jesus Christ and work and let some of the stuff in the world fall off. Now is the time. Theological dialogue has its place, let's not get into an argument, we've got a blind man here, let's get him some sight.

⁸ From a transcript of John MacArthur tape GC 1525 JESUS OPENS BLIND EYES" John 9:1-12.