

Progressive Revelation and Sanctification

Mark 08:22-26

Series: Christ Our Focus

1. Introduction:

- a. This is the only miracle recorded to happen in stages
 - i. This miracle is strange for us because it is atypical of Christ's previous miracle.
- b. It is important for us to realize this was not a lack of power in Christ but rather a lesson
 - i. He had performed greater miracles instantaneously.
 1. An example of this is the raising of Jairus' daughter

2. Verse 22 –

- a. We have two familiar motifs in this passage of scripture
 - i. **ONE** – In it we see the power of intercession displayed for us again –
 1. The villagers cast themselves upon Christ's dear mercy and grace.
 2. This reaction by the villagers reminds us that there is no better place for any Christian to be but in the place of intercession for others.
 3. **Andrew Murray** - Nothing delights Him more than to find those whom He can take with Him into the Father's presence, clothing them with power to pray down God's blessing to those around them, training them to be His fellow-workers in the intercession by which the kingdom is to be revealed on earth.
 4. Intercession rains down mercy and suspends judgment – **Psalms 106:23** Therefore he said he would destroy them-- had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them.
 - a. We must learn to stand in the gap
 - ii. **TWO** – In order to intercede we must realize that we are beggars and the sufficiency, the power comes from Christ.

1. The crowd recognizes that only in Christ is there sufficiency of power to produce the miraculous
2. We as Christian must have the same mind-set—only in Christ are the blind made to see.

3. Verses 23 – Christ’s Methods

- a. Christ takes this man by the hand and conducts him away
- b. We must note the following:
 - i. One word would have been sufficient
 - ii. The Lord is not tied to any particular means by which he bestows grace on men
 1. God acts in the council of His God will
 - iii. In all His work, God is sovereign – he will give an accounting of himself to no one – He is free to act
 1. **Isaiah 46:10** Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'
 - iv. **SIDENOTE** – As Christians, we must take great pleasure, comfort, and fear in the fact that God is sovereign.
 1. This doctrine is essential for victorious Christian living.
 - a. This doctrine is what gives meaning to all the chaos of this world.
- c. We can only understand God as far as he has revealed himself to us – transcendence
 - i. **TRANSCEDENCE**: **Deuteronomy 29:29** "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.
 - ii. There are truths in God that for now will go unexplained.
- d. Do you see anything –
 - i. The question looks like an echo of Jesus’ pleading questions of the disciples in the last chapter. Therefore, the restoring of this blind man is juxtaposed with the previous story in which the disciples are rebuked for spiritual blindness.
 - ii. **Mark 8:18** Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?

- iii. One is blind by nature and the others are blinded by doubt.
 - iv. Every person in this world, apart from Christ is blind.
 - e. Only in Christ can this blind man be restored and only in Christ can the disciples' sight be activated

- 4. Verse 24 – I see men like trees
 - a. This man most probably could see before and he became blind later.
 - b. **PROGRESSIVE REVELATION** – The blind man's restoration in a progressive state shows that the blind disciples will have full faith vision restored to them as they walk with Christ.
 - i. The more I walk with Christ the more I can see.

- 5. Verse 25 – **PROGRESSIVE REVELATION CONTINUED** – Put his hands on him again and he could see everyone clearly
 - a. This is emblematic of spiritual working of God
 - i. Frequently, the Holy Spirit works this way in the conversion of souls.
 - 1. To some it is a slow process while others are converted quickly.
 - a. While there is life, we can never give up on those around us. The Gospel must be preached.
 - b. **PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION** – For the new believer and for the maturing saint.
 - i. To the new Christian, his new found vision in Christ is dazzling and clarity comes slowly as a working of Christ.
 - 1. Maturity in Christ is dependent upon Christ
 - 2. We must be patient with the new believer as God continues to open his line of sight by his marvelous touch
 - ii. This is also the present position of the elect in Christ in this world.
 - 1. We are really never going to see Christ absolutely clearly until we are in his presence.
 - 2. We are seeing more and more in stages.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 13:10-12** But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. (11) When I was

a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

(12) For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

iii. Our sanctification is helped or hindered by our engaging in or forsaking the means of grace that God has given unto us.

1. Necessity of Scripture
2. Necessity of Prayer

6. Conclusion

- a. The healing from blindness to partial sight to complete vision comes solely from repeatedly being touched by Jesus
 - i. The disciples will be arriving to a more complete understanding in next week sermon – they will see men as trees (partial vision).
 - ii. **Mark 8:29** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."

7. Benediction –

- a. **2 Peter 1:19** And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;