

Willing Obedience
John 9:1-7
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Our Lord performed a miracle of healing a man born blind by recreating his eyes.

The healing of the man born blind is one of the miracles of Jesus in the Gospels, in which Jesus restored the sight of a man at Siloam.

Just how many miracles did Jesus perform during His life and earthly ministry on earth? The answer is, we do not know.

While we do not know how many miracles were performed, we can count those that are clearly spoken of in the gospel accounts. In doing that, we come up with 38, it is possible we may have missed some, if so, just add them to your list.

We are unable to determine an actual count because we are told in four passages that Jesus healed many. Each of those healings is a miracle in and of itself, and we are not told how many there were. Plus, there are many other miracles, like casting out demons, calming the waters, etc.

Jesus did miracles for many reasons. First, Jesus told us that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister (Mark 10:45) and in His miracles He certainly did that!

Another reason Jesus performed miracles was to reveal Himself as being sent by God, as being the Son of Man (a Messianic title), and as being the Son of God. Peter on the day of Pentecost affirmed this when he said that Jesus' miracles showed Him to be "a man approved of God." (Acts 2:22)

Jesus also did miracles to glorify the Father, because all miracles point to the Father. The miracles Jesus did point to the Father in the power they displayed. Remember, Jesus had set aside His divinity, living only in His humanity, while here on earth. So, His miracles were done by the power of the Holy Spirit Who descended upon Him at His baptism and worked in and through Him. Again, on the day of Pentecost, Peter confirmed this by saying that God showed/proved Jesus by miracles, which He did through Jesus (Acts 2:22).

One more reason for Jesus performing miracles was to give us a glimpse of that which is to come. One day all things will be made new by the power of God. The earth and all things in the earth will be restored to the perfection and perfect peace that was enjoyed in the Garden.

God's plan of redemption and restoration will be completed and that will be a miracle of glory displayed forever.

In our lesson for today, the disciples of Jesus asked a very interesting question, "..., Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" v. 2

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The disciples assumed, like most Jews of their day, that sin was the main cause of all suffering, thus, this man was blind either because he had sinned or his parents had sinned.

Sin may be the cause of suffering, as clearly indicated in Scripture, it is not always the cause necessarily (I Corinthians 11:30; James 5:15; II Corinthians 12:7; Galatians 4:13).

The answer that Jesus gave to His disciples rather surprised them, "..., It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him." v. 3

The blind man's physical defect was a tool that would bring glory to God. Our Lord did not deny the general connection between sin and suffering, but that in this case, the idea that personal acts of sin were the direct cause did not apply here.

God's sovereignty and His purposes were clearly on display in the case of this blind man. God allowed the blind man to be born blind so that Jesus could heal him and that as a result, the works of God would be revealed.

Jesus is reminding His disciples that He must do the works of His Father. This shows that the works of God, that were to be manifest, were to be done by Jesus. God the Father gave His Son many works to do and the Son did them very well. Jesus also knew that His time here on earth was drawing to a close because "... the night is coming when no one can work." v. 4

The night is coming, meaning, our death will come, so while we have the opportunity, we must do the work that has been assigned to our hands to work out our salvation.

Philippians 2:12 – "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;"

Paul desires the Philippians, as well as us today, to respond positively to his admonition to have the mind of Christ (vv. 5-8). The Greek word rendered "work

out” means “to continually work to bring something to fulfillment or completion.” Paul is encouraging the Philippians, as well as us, to develop spiritually, thus “working out” our salvation by applying scripture to our lives daily. It is the believer’s responsibility to actively pursue obedience in the process of sanctification. Keep in mind that the sanctification process is a continuous process and with “fear and trembling” believers are to pursue their sanctification by having a healthy fear of not offending God and having a righteous respect for Him.

Keep in mind also that it is God Who is working in us!

Philippians 2:13 – “for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”

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God produces the good works and spiritual fruit in the lives of believers and it is the believers’ responsibility to submit, surrender, and serve in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God works in our lives as believers through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit Who “fills us,” enabling us, to willingly live godly lives. We are working out our salvation not working for our salvation.

The Father, Who sent Christ into the world, gave Him work to do. The primary work of course was to glorify God the Father and in so doing, He would redeem mankind.

Jesus is reminding His disciples that He must work the works of Him that sent Him –

- (1) Jesus had a precise work to do upon earth – all arranged and laid out for Him
- (2) Jesus did “the works of God” particularly “going about doing good”
- (3) Jesus did work that had a precise time and place
- (4) Jesus did work that had a definite termination, period of completion
- (5) Jesus acted under the direction of His Father because He knew that “the night cometh when no man can work”

Jesus made it very clear to His disciples then, as well as to us today, that He is “the Light of the world. v. 5

Jesus is not only the spiritual light of the world, but He would also provide the means of physical light for the blind man.

The Old Testament indicates that the coming of Messiah would be a time when the Lord would be a light for His people.

Isaiah 60:19-20 – “The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. 20 Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended.”

Just so you know I have done my homework, these verses form the basis for the description of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and earth (Revelation 21:1).

In the New Jerusalem there will be no physical blindness. This blind man in our text is about to experience something he has never experienced before, he will be able to see physically.

4 – Willing Obedience

Jesus mixed clay with salvia which was a common practice used for eye infections in that day. Jesus may have used the clay to provide an opportunity for the blind man to demonstrate his faith by following the instructions of Jesus. v. 6

This seems like a very unsanitary method of using clay and salvia but do not forget Who is doing this! Jesus has complete control of the elements and as a result, the elements will function as He commands! Just as He had done when He originally made human beings out of the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7), Jesus may have also fashioned a new set of eyes for this blind man.

We can see from this verse (v. 6), what Jesus did but we do not know how He did it! The results are seen in the next verse.

Jesus gave the blind man some very simple instructions, “..., Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.” The blind man followed Jesus’ instructions and as a result, his life will never be the same. v. 7

Jesus, then, decided to complete the healing process by having the man take action himself, prescribing that the man should go wash in the Pool of Siloam. Jesus may have wanted to arouse more faith from the man by asking him to do something to participate in the healing process.

The Pool of Siloam (a spring-fed pool of fresh water that people used for purification) symbolizes the man’s progression toward greater physical and spiritual

purity because he washed off the mud that Jesus put on his eyes, and while doing so, his faith was rewarded with a miracle.

The blind man did just as he had been instructed by Jesus. He went to the pool of Siloam, washed the clay and saliva from his eyes, and to his amazement, he “came back seeing.”

What a Mighty God we serve!

This miracle of giving sight to the blind man who was born blind is the sixth of seven miraculous “signs” recorded in the gospel of John.

This miracle is unique for several reasons –

- (1) Jesus is about to grant this man an ability he does not naturally possess
- (2) It corresponds to Old Testament predictions that the Messiah would give sight to the blind (Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 42:7)
- (3) Jesus uses this moment as an example to teach the disciples that not all suffering is punishment for sin

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- (4) This miracle occurs on a Sabbath day, further irritating the Pharisees, whom Jesus seems to be deliberately antagonizing

The result of this miracle of restoring the sight of the blind man became a significant moment for Jesus’ public ministry. Until Jesus resurrects Lazarus, this will be seen by many as the primary evidence of His power.

John 11:37 – “And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?”

There were those who did not believe that Jesus was Who He said He was in spite of the fact that they had witnessed Him restoring the sight of the blind man. Now Lazarus was dead and here they are questioning whether or not Jesus could have prevented Lazarus from dying. They had seen Jesus restore the sight of the blind man and now they are questioning whether or not He could have prevented Lazarus from dying. They are in for a very big surprise but that is another lesson.

Our lesson concludes with Jesus finding the man he had healed and talking with him again.

John 9:35-39 – “Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” 36 He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” 37 And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.” 38 Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshipped Him.

39 And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

The story shows the man progressing in spiritual sight as he experiences the miracle of seeing his physical sight healed. First, he views Jesus as a “man,” then as a “prophet,” and finally comes to worship Jesus as the “Son of Man” – the Savior of the world.

Who do you say Jesus is?

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