

A Question of Vision

Mark 8:22-26 (text: v. 23) [Series: "Questions Jesus Asks"]

Jesus asked the healed blind man a question (v. 23). The specific words of Jesus' question are not given. The Bible simply says, "**he asked him if he saw aught.**" The question may have been, "Can you see anything?" Or, "How is your vision now?" "What do you see?" Whatever the exact words were, it was a question concerning VISION and seeing things CLEARLY (v. 25). In this message I hope to set our sights for 2016. We must have clarity of spiritual vision (Prov. 29:18).

Jesus healed FIVE blind men in the Bible. The healing of the blind man in our text is one of the more neglected miracles of Jesus that is preached about. As I mentioned last week, there are many sermons on the feeding of the 5,000, but not many on the feeding of the 4,000. I've preached several messages on the healing of the man born blind in John 9 and blind Bartimaeus. But until today, I've never preached on the healing of the blind man in our text.

This man was not born blind. He knew what trees looked like, so he must have been able to see at one time. The Bible says his sight was "*restored.*"

BACKGROUND: This miracle is only recorded in the book of Mark. Mark has a particular literary style different from Matthew, Luke and John. Mark uses a lot of **repetition** in his gospel.

➡ In Mark chapters 6-7...

1. Jesus feeds the 5,000...
2. He crosses the Sea of Galilee...
3. He has a conflict with the Pharisees...
4. He has a conversation with His disciples about bread...
5. He heals a man using spittle and laying on of hands.

➡ In Mark chapter 8...

1. Jesus feeds the 4,000;
2. He crosses the Sea of Galilee
3. He has a confrontation with the Pharisees

4. He has a conversation with His disciples about bread.

5. He heals a man using spittle and laying of hands.

This repetition should alert us to an important truth Jesus is trying to teach.

Let's back up and see what happened before the healing the blind man.

I. The PROBLEM of the disciples. (vs. 14-21).

- Jesus was not giving His disciples bread baking lessons. The leaven was not physical leaven used in bread, but the doctrine and hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Mt. 16;11-12; Luke 12:1). They missed the spiritual application.
 - The number of baskets of fragments also had spiritual significance (vs. 19-20). But the disciples didn't make the spiritual connection (v. 21).
 - Jesus was teaching a spiritual lesson, but the disciples were only thinking in the physical realm. (Like Nicodemus)
- A. A CONTRAST—There are two miraculous healings that are only found in Mark's gospel. Both occur within a chapter of each oth

➡ This miracle is very ODD. Jesus performed this miracle unlike any other miracle.

A. The PLACE of the healing was odd—Outside of Bethsaida (v. 22).

- Jesus was well known in this region. He spent most of His public ministry here (20 months).
- Jesus performed more miracles and some of His greatest miracles in this area. People in this region were given more “light” than any other people living at that time.
- This is the LAST miracle Jesus performed in this region. He was done here. Jesus now begins heading towards Jerusalem where He will be crucified.

1. Jesus could have healed him right on the spot. Why did Jesus lead him out of the town to heal him (v. 23)? Then after he was healed, why did Jesus tell him not to go back into the town (v. 26)? The man must not have been from Bethsaida, because Jesus told him to go “*to his house.*” His house must not have been in Bethsaida.

2. Jesus told him not to tell anyone in Bethsaida about his healing. It would have been impossible to keep the healing of this man’s eyes secret if he went back into the town. Everyone would have recognized him.

- It wasn’t because Jesus didn’t want anyone to know about what He did. Jesus just did not want anyone *in Bethsaida* to know about this miracle.

3. What was the problem with Bethsaida? Jesus already sentenced Bethsaida to judgment because of their continued unbelief (Mt. 11:20-22 cf Mk. 8:11-12).

B. The PROCEDURE of the miracle was odd. Jesus did something in this miracle He did not do in any of His other miracles.

1. Jesus “*asked him if he saw aught*” (v. 23). Jesus never had to ask anyone after He healed them if they were better—“How do you feel now?” He never healed a blind man and asked, “Did it work? Tell Me how many fingers am I holding up.”

- All Jesus' healings were complete in one step... except this one. This is the only time when Jesus touched a man, and it did not completely heal him on the first touch.
 - After the first touch, the man answered Jesus, "*I see men as trees walking.*" I see shapes, but my vision is blurry.
 - That was NOT GOOD ENOUGH. Jesus does not do things half-way. Jesus didn't say, "Well, I'm sorry your vision isn't any clearer, but I'm on a tight schedule to get to Jerusalem. Just be thankful for the sight what you got. At least your vision is better than it was before."
2. This man needed A SECOND touch of Jesus' hands (v. 25).
The question is: **Why did this healing require TWO TOUCHES?** Couldn't Jesus have healed him with one touch? Actually, Jesus could have healed him with NO TOUCH!
- **Whose fault** was it that the first touch wasn't enough? Jesus? Was Jesus just having an "off day." No! Was it the fault of the blind man? Did he lack faith? No!
 - If it wasn't the fault of Jesus or the blind man, then the need for a second touch must be to teach a spiritual truth.

III. The PURPOSE in the healing.

- ➡ This healing was meant to be an OBJECT LESSON to show the condition of the disciples. Like the blind man, they were not seeing things CLEARLY (v. 18).
- A. Jesus was showing His disciples they were dependent upon Him to see spiritual things clearly.
- We need a "second touch" to see things as God sees them.
- B. Four stages of spiritual vision:
1. **Total** blindness—The unsaved man is spiritually blind (2 Cor. 4:4). He cannot see the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14; John 3:3).
 2. **Partial** sight—When a person gets saved, God opens his spiritual eyes. Paul told King Agrippa that God sent him to lost Gentiles, "*To open their eyes, and to turn them from*

darkness to light" (Acts 26:18). Do you remember when you first got saved how the Bible was opened up to your understanding?

3. **Progressive** sight—As you grow spiritually, the more the Holy Ghost will reveal spiritual truths to you (John 16:12-13).
4. **Perfect** sight—When I get to heaven, I'll see things perfectly (1 Cor. 13:12—"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.").
 - Going from total blindness to partial sight is *instantaneous*.
 - Going from partial sight to progressive sight is *gradual*.
 - Going from progressive sight to perfect sight is *instantaneous*.

SUMMATION: The disciples had been walking with Jesus for at least two years, but still were not seeing clearly. They still did not have a clear understanding of Calvary. They are like the blind man who had enough sight to see the shape of things, but not clearly.

Many church members are like this. They are not totally blind, but they still cannot see things clearly as God sees them.

After being a pastor for over 40 years, I am still amazed by some of...

- ...the dumb decisions Christians make.
- ...the mistakes Christians fall into.
- ...the lame alibis Christians use to excuse the way they live.

➡ We need another touch from Jesus to see things the way He sees them.

1. **To see ourselves as Jesus sees us.** (1) We are sinners saved by God's grace, and nothing more. Without Jesus we are nothing. (2) We are not our own—We've been purchased by the blood of Christ and we belong to Him. May God help us to see this ALWAYS.
2. **To see souls as Jesus sees them.** Too many of us only "*see men as trees walking.*" We see people, but we fail to see them as eternal souls who are either heaven bound or hell bound. We see children...

Teenagers... young adults... married couples, but do we see them as
God sees them?

God touch us again that we may see souls as You see them!

Song: *"Looking Through His Eyes"* by Mike Otto

Let me see this world, dear Lord, as though, I were looking through your eyes,
A world of men who don't want you, Lord, but a world for which you died,
Let me kneel with you in the Garden, blur my eyes with tears of agony,
For if once, I could see this world the way you see, I just know, I'd serve you
more faithfully.

Let me see this world, dear Lord, even though most men mock your Holy Name.
As they beat You and curse you, and spit upon You, Lord,
Help me love them as you love them just the same.
Let me stand high above my own petty problems, and see men, hell-bound
eternally.

For if once I could see this world the way You see, I just know I'd serve you
more faithfully.

➡ How is your spiritual vision. Jesus asks us if we see aught? What do
you see?

#307— *OPEN MY EYES (That I may See)*