

Sermon Outlines
To See As Trees Walking

Reading:

Mark 8:22-26

The lessons of this miracle of a blind man's healing, which is tucked away in chapter eight of Mark's gospel, are life changing.

1) We see the value of bringing men to the Lord Jesus to meet their needs.

- a) This is a lesson for prayer. From the verse 22 we learn that a number of people were involved in making it possible to bring this blind man face to face with the Lord. What do we think of them? Were they simply opportunists who took advantage of the Lord's presence? Maybe, and we too shall be called opportunists for using religion and the good name of Christianity. However, these "evangelists" are to be commended. They are nameless here, but shall not be nameless nor unrewarded on the eternal day!
- b) Let us learn that it is never wasteful nor prideful to bring sinners to know the Lord Jesus and to seek His help for them. We do this in prayer. We also do this in preaching the gospel and by bringing people along to hear of the grace that is in the Son of God. The church's ministry should be thoroughly taken up with bringing needy souls to know the Lord.
- c) From this man's case of blindness, we are reminded that all sons and daughters of Adam are spiritually blind. They cannot see the grace that is in the Lord and they must be brought to Him so that their eyes be opened.
- d) Throughout the Bible, this spiritual blindness is demonstrated and we know that, as the Light of the world, the Lord came into the world to give spiritual eyesight.
- e) This demonstrates the radical nature of conversion to Christ that is required, for when eyes are opened everything changes (2 Cor. 5:17). The need of man is not in more opportunities to help himself through his problems. He needs the light of the Lord to shine into his soul.

2) We see that the Lord is sovereign in the means and methods of His working in different lives.

- a) It is difficult to understand why the Lord led the man outside the city and why He used spittle on the man's eyes, and why the Lord didn't heal this man instantly as in many other instances. We learn that the Lord seldom works the same type of miracle in the same manner.
- b) The apostle Paul taught: "And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (2 Cor. 2:1). We must learn to trust God to work His will in His way. What God wrought in past generations and in past cases with which we are familiar with, may not be repeated again in the same way again in our life time.
- c) We, therefore, must not conclude that God is not working when we do not see the same blessings in the same repeated manner.
- d) God is able to use the preacher who preaches to a sinner for a lifetime, or God may use the stranger who speaks but once to a passerby. The Spirit of God can work conviction in souls in many ways and through many means.
- e) However, God's ordained means are ever to be used. His word, preaching the gospel and witnessing one-to-one are still to be employed (Romans 10:17, 1 John 5:13, 1Peter 1:23).

3) We learn that not all conversions are instantaneous. Many are brought to the light of Christ gradually.

- a) After the first touch of the Saviour's power this man could only "see men as trees, walking." His ability to see was vastly better than the darkness of his previous blindness, but it was still blurred. He could see certain outlines of people moving, but the clarity of detail was missing. It was after the second touch of the Saviour's healing power that he "saw every man clearly" (Mark 8:25).
- b) We learn that not everyone is brought to a clear profession of faith instantly with the full assurance of sins forgiven. Many are led to the light through many applications of the gospel. Indeed all people who are brought to faith in Christ still need to grow in understanding of what Christ has done for them.

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- c) I read this week of a man who was converted three years after he heard the gospel just once from the lips of George Whitefield. During those three years the Spirit of God continued to strive with his conscience.
- d) Job's understanding developed greatly after his trials (Job 42:1-6).
- e) We all need to be taught of the Lord to grow in our understanding of God's goodness and grace to our souls (1 Cor. 2:12-16).
- f) Surely, we will have an even greater advance in knowledge of God and His goodness when we are glorified. Here on earth we can only see things partially, compared to the light and glory that will be in heaven.

Conclusion

- 1) This lesser-known miracle of the Lord is another confidence booster in the power of the Lord to shine His light into sinful hearts that are blind in their sin.
- 2) Human depravity requires a miracle of restoration. No man is saved by his own power, nor by the power of man. Only the Lord can open the spiritual faculties of the soul. This is the Holy Spirit's ministry to regenerate and lead sinners to know the grace that is in the Lord Jesus.
- 3) This teaches us that we should earnestly pray, "Open their eyes, Lord." Spiritual darkness is the enemy of the soul. Spiritual light is the gift every soul needs (Eph. 4:17-24).
- 4) Let us also pray in hope that those we bring to the Lord, as we do in prayer, the Lord will be pleased to shine His light into their souls.

. . . Ian Goligher