

28. Jesus Healed a Blind Man

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand the importance of seeking spiritual wisdom and understanding from the Lord, so they will be able to effectively help others. In our topic today, we will see that Jesus healed a blind man in a somewhat unique way.

In Mark 8:22-23 we read, “Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.” We see that Jesus came to the town of Bethsaida. This was the town where at least three of the disciples of Jesus had grown up. John 1:44 says, “Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.” However, this was also a town that consistently rejected the teaching of Jesus. That is why Jesus promised judgment to the people of Bethsaida in Matthew 11:21 and Luke 10:13. Luke 10:13 says, “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.”

On this particular visit of Jesus to this city, we see that some of the people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged Jesus to touch him. Because of the unbelief in this town, we see that Jesus led this man out of the town. At times, Jesus purposely healed a person out of the sight of those who were filled with unbelief. One illustration of this was when Jesus healed the daughter of Jairus. Mark 5:39-40 says, “When He came in, He said to them, ‘Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.’ And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with Him, and entered where the child was lying.” Jesus did not allow the mocking crowd to see the daughter healed. In the same way, Jesus did not allow the people of Bethsaida to see the healing of this blind man.

Once Jesus and the blind man were out of the town, we see that Jesus spit on the eyes of the blind man and then put His hands on the man. Jesus had done these same three things to the man who was deaf and had a speech impediment in the previous chapter. Mark 7:33-35 says, “And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, ‘Ephphatha,’ that is, ‘Be opened.’ Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.” Jesus also took him aside, touched him, and spit on the part of the man that needed healing. Since Jesus took both of these people away from the crowd before healing them, these other actions let them know that Jesus did plan to heal them.

Jesus then asked this man if he saw anything. Mark 8:24-26 says, “And he looked up and said, ‘I see men like trees, walking.’ Then He put *His* hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. Then He sent him away to his house, saying, ‘Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.’ Here, we see that this man could see some things, but he could not see clearly. Then, Jesus put His hands on the eyes of the man again and made him look up. The word translated “look up” is used twenty-six times in the New Testament

and is translated “to receive sight” fifteen of those times. Mark 10:51 and 52, where this word is used twice, says, “So Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’ The blind man said to Him, ‘Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go your way; your faith has made you well.’ And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.”

This is the only time where we read that Jesus healed a person in two stages. The reason for this is not explained, but it may be due to the fact that the man himself had not yet shown any faith. He had been brought by others to Jesus. Jesus had led him out of town, touched his eyes, and asked if he saw anything. None of those actions required faith. However, we see that Jesus now asked him to respond before Jesus gave him clear vision. This gave him an opportunity to show that he believed Jesus could completely heal him. Jesus put His hands on the eyes of the man a second time and told him to look up. In Numbers 21:9, we read, “So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.” In this passage, we see that those who had faith, and looked at the bronze serpent, lived. Jesus gave this man the same simple instruction, to look up.

As soon as he looked up, the sight of this man was fully restored and he saw everyone clearly. John 20:30-31 says, “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” This man believed the words of Jesus, and looked up. This man believed Jesus, and obeyed Him. At that very moment, the sight of the man was fully restored. The action of this man shows a very simple illustration of what it means to believe Jesus.

Jesus then gave the man some additional instructions. First, Jesus told the man to go to his home. Second, Jesus told him not to go into the town. Third, Jesus told the man to tell no one in the town. Apparently, the man followed all of these instructions, because nothing more is said about him. This miracle is unusual, because it was done in two stages. However, it is also an illustration of a man who followed the instructions of Jesus in every detail.

Jesus, and His disciples, then left that region and went to the city of Caesarea Philippi. That city was about twenty-five miles north of Bethsaida and was located near Mount Hermon. Mark 8:27-30 says, “Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, ‘Who do men say that I am?’ So they answered, ‘John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Peter answered and said to Him, ‘You are the Christ.’ Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.” Jesus had plenty of time to talk with the disciples as they walked the twenty-five miles to Caesarea Philippi.

Jesus used this opportunity, as they were walking along the road, to ask the disciples some questions. The first question was, “Who do men say that I am?” This question gave the disciples the opportunity to tell the opinions others had expressed to them about Jesus. We see from the answers that the people had many different opinions about Jesus. Some of the people thought He

must be John the Baptist, which meant they thought John the Baptist had risen from the dead and come back to life after Herod had killed him. These people thought that a great miracle had happened.

Other people had the opinion that Jesus must be Elijah. Malachi 4:5-6 says, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.” The people, who thought that Jesus was Elijah, were expecting God to send Elijah back to the earth before the coming of the Lord. These were people who were thinking about the promises of God regarding the future.

A third group of people said that Jesus was just one of the prophets. Throughout the past history of Israel, God had sent many prophets to speak to the Jews for God. These people felt that Jesus was another prophet. Each of the groups, that had these opinions, were looking forward to the fact that God was getting ready to fulfill some of the promises that had been made in the Old Testament about the future of Israel. However, none of these opinions showed that they fully understood who Jesus was. John 1:14 says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John wrote this verse many years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. In this verse, John explained that the Word (Jesus) was God and revealed the glory of God. John then explained, through the rest of the book, that Jesus truly was the Son of God and that He was One with the Father.

However, Jesus asked these questions of the disciples because He had one other question He wanted to ask them. That was the most important question. Jesus then asked, “But who do you say that I am?” The disciples had given opinions of what other people had said about Jesus. However, this question gave the disciples the opportunity to explain who they thought Jesus was. Peter answered this question, and probably spoke for himself and for the rest of the disciples. Peter said, “You are the Christ.” The word “Christ” means *the Anointed One or the Son of God*. The disciples believed that Jesus was the Messiah. John 6:68-69 says, “But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus warned the disciples not to tell anyone else who He was. Jesus had to go to the cross, die and be raised again the third day before the disciples were to begin telling others that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. However, Jesus could now begin preparing the disciples for the time when that would happen. In the same way, we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain clearly that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Since Christ has now died and risen from the dead, that is the message we want to show them how to share with others. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to share this message.