

Discuss:

What's the closest thing to a "miracle" you have witnessed or been personally aware of? How did those near to what took place interpret or understand it? Were there a variety of interpretations?

The Works of God Displayed!

Last week, we looked at Jesus' claims in chapter 7 and 8 to bring the water and light of life to those who receive him. We mentioned how impressive symbols of water and light were displayed throughout the Feast of Tabernacles. In chapter 9, these gifts of water and light are put on display yet again. They come not as symbols and statements, though, but as the instruments of transformation in the life of a real person.

Near the temple the disciples encounter a man blind from birth. They wonder aloud to Jesus about his affliction... was it his sin or his parents that caused this to happen? Jesus replies "neither... this happened so *that the works of God might be displayed in him.*"

Reiterating that he is indeed the light of the world (v.5), Jesus makes mud with his saliva and places it on the man's eyes.

Jesus then sends the man to wash away this mud with **water** from the Pool of Siloam. This is the very pool from which the waters symbolizing God's Spirit were drawn during the Feast of Tabernacles. The same waters of which Jesus has proclaimed himself the living embodiment of!

As the man's eyes are washed by this water, he receives the gift of sight. His eyes are filled *with* and *by* the **light** of the world! What's more, with these new eyes he looks upon Jesus and begins to worship him (v. 37-38). Through the gifts of Christ's water and light, this man's life is utterly transformed!

Making it Personal:

- 1) Likely the blind man in this story had long been ignored in his suffering. Some even blamed him for it. For his life to change, Jesus and the disciples had to take notice of his situation. Who has God placed in your path that might be suffering (physically, emotionally, spiritually)? What might your attention/care take in that relationship look like?
- 2) It may be difficult to "read ourselves" into the hard-hearted response of the Pharisees in this story. Yet, by claiming to "know" and "see" more than they actually did, they deceived themselves and remained "blind". Prayerfully consider whether there are areas where you have a propensity to this sort of "blindness".

A Closer Look:

- 1) Look at verses 1-7. Consider how Jesus sees this man differently than others who have passed by. Highlight significant details in (a) how Jesus speaks of this man (b) how Jesus goes about healing him. Why are these important?
- 2) Read verses 24-34. Both the Pharisees and the man who has been healed try to make sense of what Jesus has just done. Compare and contrast their respective approaches and responses.
- 3) Finally look at verses 35-41. What does Jesus say is the difference between the blindness of this man, and the blindness of the Pharisees?

The Passage: John 9:1-7, 24-41

John 9:1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. 4 As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

6 After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing....

24 A second time [the Pharisees] summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." 25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" 26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"

28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! 29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." 30 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." 34 To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." 37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." 38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." 40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" 41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.