

The Blind Man at Bethsaida

Mark 8: 22-26

Today we find Jesus has returned to Bethsaida, a town near His home-base in Capernaum. He had been there following the feeding of the 5,000, and the stormy night when He walked on the water. During His previous visit, Jesus had healed many who were sick and afflicted throughout that area. As He returned, He again encounters a man in need of His touch.

Our text today reveals great spiritual truth. While everyone cannot identify with physical blindness, we can relate to the spiritual blindness all deal with prior to salvation. Through His encounter with the blind man we discover the process through which one receives spiritual sight in salvation. As we discuss the [phases](#) of this encounter, I want to preach on: [The Blind Man at Bethsaida](#).

I. The Condition of the Man (22) – [And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him](#). While Mark doesn't offer much detail, we do find enough to discern the condition of this man. Consider:

A. His Infirmary – His name is not mentioned, but we do know the man suffered from physical blindness. He was unable to see, surely depending on others for his well-being. The text doesn't reveal how long he had been in this condition, and it really doesn't affect the outcome. Regardless of the time involved, the man was currently blind and unable to see.

- Most are unwilling to admit it, but we all can identify with this man. In fact, we are all born with such an infirmity. Due to the fall of Adam and the curse of sin, all are born spiritually blind. We are unable to see the truths of the Gospel, being blinded by sin. We are unable to do anything about our condition, and must rely on others to help us. While men are unable to save, they can assist us by pointing us to the Lord and providing direction for those who walk in blindness.

B. The Intercession – We also find that this man was loved by those who knew him. He was not left alone to suffer through life. Some of his friends had heard that Jesus was in town and they brought the man to Jesus. They pleaded with the Lord to touch this man, desiring Jesus to heal him of his infirmity. Those who were able to see interceded for one who could not.

- This is very simple and yet it amplifies a profound truth. Where would we be had someone not cared enough to share Jesus with us, interceding with the Lord regarding our salvation. I am

forever grateful for all who prayed for me and shared the Gospel with me. We now have an obligation to do the same for others who have yet to experience salvation.

II. The Compassion of the Lord (23a) – [And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town.](#) Here we discover the compassion Jesus showed the man in need. We find:

A. It was Personal – The man stood in need of a personal touch from the Lord. He was the one who was unable to see. He had a particular need and Jesus dealt with him personally. The healing of others would certainly have been a blessing, but their healing would not have provided sight for him. Jesus was willing to meet the need of this man.

- I am thankful for the blessings and salvation of others, but their salvation was not sufficient for me. I too stood in need of the Lord's touch. While I was surrounded by those who had received their spiritual sight, I remained in darkness. Thankfully Jesus was interested in my need and was willing to provide salvation for me!

B. It was Private – Jesus led the man out of town, away from the distractions and noise, to a private place to deal with his need. This would further affirm that Jesus was aware of his need and genuinely concerned. Jesus was leading the man to a place where He could minister unto him.

- Salvation often occurs in a public setting, but it is always a personal and private experience. The Lord leads us to a place of faith through the conviction of the Spirit. We have to come to a place where we realize our need and trust the Lord to provide what we desperately need. One cannot receive salvation without being led of the Lord. He must work in our hearts and lives through the Spirit, leading us to the place of salvation.

III. The Transformation of the Man (23b-26) – As Jesus worked with the blind man, his life was transformed through the power of the Lord. Consider:

A. The Provision (23b) – [and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.](#) As Jesus began to minister to the man, He spit on his eyes and laid His hands upon him. While many may find this somewhat unsettling, Jesus knew what He was doing. The man was blind and could not see what the Lord was doing. No doubt like others with specific physical limitations, their other senses are more in tune with the world around them. The man could feel the touch of Jesus and the dampness on his eyes. This served to prove the Lord was working.

- I know we are not saved by feelings and our emotions do not prove salvation. However, as the Lord works with us in salvation, we are aware of His provision and our need for Him. Through the working of the Spirit, we come to a place where we feel the Lord's presence, drawing us to Himself. This is not a physical touch, but it is undeniable. I still remember the day Jesus touched me, through the working of the Spirit, leading me to faith and salvation.

B. The Progression (24-25) – *And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.* ^[25] *After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.*

This part of the passage causes confusion for some, but it reveals great truth. Following the initial touch from Jesus, the man could see, but his sight was not yet as it should be. He saw images that were still distorted. As he looked at men, they appeared to be trees that were walking. His sight was being restored, but it was not yet as it should be. Jesus touched his eyes again and this time he saw clearly.

- This in no way conveys that Jesus was limited in His power at this moment. He could have simply spoken a word and the man's sight would have been completely restored. Jesus worked with the man in such a way with purpose. Jesus was leading the man in faith. As the Lord touched his eyes the first time, the man had yet to fully believe. Seeing his vision improve, his faith was strengthened, and he received complete healing.

- Is that not how the Lord worked in many of our lives? Some respond in faith believing the first time they hear the Gospel, but for many it takes several times hearing the Gospel, being led of the Spirit, for them to respond in faith unto salvation. As the Lord reveals Himself initially, we are drawn toward Him. The seed of the Gospel is planted. As the Spirit continues to work in our lives, we are eventually brought to the place of obedient faith, resulting in salvation.

- Actually this process continues following salvation. Not that we lose our salvation, or have another salvation experience, but the Lord does lead us in ways that strengthens our faith. This journey with the Lord begins at salvation, but it is a continual growing process as long as we live. At times we see things blurry because of doubt and fear. As we mature in faith, learning to trust the Lord, our vision improves and we see things more clearly. I am glad the Lord continues to work in the lives of those who belong to Him! *Eph.4:13-15 – Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:* ^[14] *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;* ^[15] *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.*

C. The Completion (25b) – and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. Jesus does nothing half-way. The man was not left with partial vision. Jesus completely restored his sight. When the Lord finished working with the man, he had received his sight. He could see clearly.

- When Jesus leads us to the place of salvation, we receive complete, eternal transformation in Him. We will continue to grow and mature in our faith, but once received, salvation is complete. We are then forgiven of sin, justified in Christ, and restored unto the Father. I remain thankful for the day Jesus opened my eyes and provided spiritual sight. He touched me, saving me by His grace. I am secure in Christ the Lord.

Conclusion: Following the miracle of healing, Jesus commanded the man to remain silent. [Mark 8:26](#) – And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town. He was not to return into Bethsaida or speak of the miracle with anyone in town. Clearly His time had not yet come and Jesus wanted to prevent a frenzy regarding the miracle. However, many suggest there was another reason for this command. The people in Bethsaida had experienced many miracles and yet they refused Jesus as the Christ. These had rejected the Lord and He would not encourage their unbelief. Their denial had come at a great cost for them. [Matt.11:21-22](#) – Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ^[22] But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. It is dangerous to experience the power and leading of the Lord and yet reject Him.

Jesus is the only way of salvation; there is no other way. If one rejects Christ, they have rejected the sole means of salvation. How have you responded to His offer of grace? Are there needs in your life today? If so, respond by faith. Come to Christ and receive the provision only He can give!