

Miracles of Jesus 12-07-08b

We pick up our study of the healing of two blind men in Matthew chapter 9. We have looked to see the basis on which they make their appeal to the Lord Jesus as the son of David, appealing specifically to his mercy. And we're practicing our skills in observing and in watching for the clues and the things that help us understand why a passage is before us. What is the reason for its inclusion in the Word of God? So we've seen Jesus departing from there and that's Jairus' house and the response of the people to the presence of the Lord Jesus.

People who are synagogue attenders, sympathizers with Jairus, closely associated with him, know his family, know his daughter and so on. And yet when Jesus comes they disbelieve him entirely. Apparently nothing of his reputation has made an imprint on them.

And so he goes from there. Two men continually follow him and are crying out as he is traveling. Now this is some distance.

You remember there was quite a distance when he left to go to Jairus' house. There was time enough for the crowds to follow, for the woman to stop him and be healed. And this is several blocks.

This is a fairly large town and apparently Peter lived on one side and Jairus lived on the other. And so these blind men follow him all the way across town, all the way back to his place of residence, which as far as we know is Peter's house. And we know that you're supposed to be nice to handicapped people, right? Give them the best parking spaces.

See a blind person tapping along, getting close to a curve or something, you want to help them. This is a natural response. So let me ask you, if you are at the mall and somebody behind you cries out and says, hey, I'm blind, can you help me? Excuse me, I'm blind, can you help me? And as you go through the mall they just keep, would you not turn around and see if you could help them? Does it not seem rather callous and inhumane and very politically incorrect for Jesus to not immediately turn around and respond? The first time these blind guys cry out, son of David, Jesus could say, finally, somebody gets it.

Here's somebody that realizes who I am and I haven't even sort of gone public yet. But he ignores them. All the way across town these blind guys are back in the back and the disciples are kind of, oh, Jesus is not going to do anything about these guys that are making a racket back here.

Through the streets, turn a corner, going down another street, turn another corner, going down, heading for the house. Blind guys, and they're blind. How are they finding their way around the town? Are they following the noise and trying not to bump into things,

trip over people? Might be beggars in the street or whatnot.

Jesus is just single-mindedly heading back to the house. What is he doing? Does he not know they're back there? Raise your hand if you think Jesus does not know the blind men are back there. Of course he knows they're back there.

So do all the disciples, so do the crowd, and he's just ignoring them. They think, well, maybe he does little girls that are dead, but he doesn't do blind. Maybe today's not heal the blind day.

Why is he paying no attention? Is he out of power? Here he's healed a woman with the issue of blood, and maybe he needs a, you know, it seems kind of irreverent to say he needs a recharge or something. Maybe he's tired out. He doesn't want to do any more healings.

What's the problem here? Try to look for a rational explanation. These guys follow him for blocks, and he doesn't turn around and say anything to them, doesn't acknowledge them whatsoever. Goes all the way to the house.

How do these guys finally get an audience, if you will, with Jesus? They have to get in the house. They're blind, tapping their way, feeling their way, hanging on to somebody's garment to get around. Seems very insensitive.

When he had come into the house, he departed from there, and when he had come to the house, this is a journey across town, the blind man came to him in the house. So what would you say about these blind guys? Give up easy? Are they persistent? Have they had occasion to demonstrate that this is not sort of a, hey, I've got an idea. Let's ask this Jesus fellow if he can make us well.

This was no idle, casual, momentary opportunity. They are dedicated. They believe he's the son of David.

They believe that he can have mercy on them and that he will, and they act accordingly. And they feel their way, tap their way, find their way across town. They figure out a way to get into the house.

They get in front of Jesus. When he stops, they finally catch up with him and get in there, and they came to him. Jesus knows what they want, and so what does he say? Does he say, well, what's your problem? What can I do for you today? What does he say? Do you believe that I am able to do this? What is this? They have said, have mercy on us.

We all know, everybody knows what the mercy is. They don't want to be blind anymore, right? So Jesus says, do you believe, he doesn't say, do you believe that I am the Christ, the son of the living God? Do you believe that I am Jesus come down from heaven? Do you believe that I have the power to, what does he say? Do you believe that I am able to

do this? Well, clearly they believe because they have followed him all the way across town and have wangled their way into the house. They said to him, yes, Lord.

They didn't say, yes, rabbi, yes, son of David, yes, Jesus, yes, sir. They said, yes, Lord. And you can use kurios for any figure of authority, but when you use it, you are recognizing authority.

And what kind of authority are they recognizing when they call him Adonai, which is, I'm sure they were speaking Aramaic, in Greek it's kurios. They say, yes, Lord. Well, what have they been heralding all the way across town? Son of David, son of David, son of David.

Do you believe that I am able to do this? Yes, kingly one, yes, one with the authority of the house and lineage of David. We believe. Jesus does not say, okay, blindness begun.

Yes, receive thou thy sight. He would have to say that to each one of them because thou is singular. Receive ye your sight.

Say it to both of them. What does he do? He touched their eyes. Really have to pay attention, and we're going to see this more and more as we look at the remaining healing miracles, how Jesus heals.

Sometimes it's at a distance. Go home, your son is well. Sometimes he speaks.

Sometimes someone touches him. In the last two miracles, right before this one, on the same day, all of these involve touching, don't they? How was the woman with the issue of blood healed? I touched the hem of your garment, Jesus says, I perceive that virtue has gone out of me. There was contact, right? Gets to Jairus' house, deals with the mourners, goes upstairs, clears everybody out except Peter, James, and John and the parents.

Reaches down, takes her by the hand. He touches her. Talitha, Kumi, I say to you, little girl, arise.

It is the touch. This day is a day of healing by contact. Now, what does contact speak of? Was it a necessary part of the mumbo-jumbo of healing? Is it some sort of a transfer of Holy Spirit power? I've got to touch you, or it won't work? Is it a part of the magic? It is done for a reason.

It is noted in the Word of God for a reason. It's another one of those little marker flags that we look at. And what does contact require? If Jesus is going to touch someone to heal them, what does it require? He's got to be incarnate, right? He's got to have a body.

Can't touch somebody if you're a spirit. Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see that I have. Jesus will tell them after the resurrection, I'm not spirit, I'm flesh.

He is the Word made flesh. He is Christ in their midst. The Kingdom of God has come into your midst.

Jesus is walking among them, and He is in bodily form. Jesus is walking among them. This is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophetic scriptures, and they ought to recognize it.

He's not a vision. He's not an idea. He's not a corporate hallucination.

He's tangible. And He didn't touch their hand or their elbow. He touches their eyes.

His fingers touch their eyes. Now later on, you know enough Bible to know there's other ways that Jesus will heal even the blind. You remember one time He's going to make a little mud with spit and smear it on a guy's eyes? We saw another blind man was healed when a demon was cast out.

Remember the blind mute spirit? Apparently the guy could hear, but he couldn't talk and couldn't see. We had that one a few miracles back. And here He touches the eyes.

Well, this requires us to think a little bit about the value, the significance of blindness in Scripture. We looked at Isaiah 64. We looked at Isaiah 42.

We know the commission of the prophet when God says, go to this people and preach to them. But when you do, be prepared because they are not going to respond. Your preaching is going to be a conviction to them.

Remember back in, I think it's Ezekiel chapter, make sure I know where I'm going here. I don't know where I'm going, so nevermind. But you remember when the prophet is commissioned and he says, go to this people and preach to them, but seeing they will see and not perceive.

Hearing they will hear and not understand. The heart of this people has grown callous. There is a demonstration of this.

And in Isaiah chapter 42, when he says, he has come to open blind eyes, but then you look at 64 and even the people that have been rehabilitated don't really see. You can open the eyes and they still don't see. And so God will say again in Isaiah, who is as blind as my servant? My servant whom I uphold, my elect one in whom I delight? That's the great servant that is going to come.

That's the Lord Jesus. But as you move through Isaiah chapter 42 and get to verse 18, hear you deaf and look you blind that you may see. Hear you deaf and look you blind that you may see.

That's why God sent Isaiah. That's why God sent Ezekiel. That's why God sent the prophets of old to preach the message.

Well, if there is no grasping, if there is no comprehension, if there is no response of faith and obedience, then it proves the people to be truly blind and truly deaf. Seeing you see and do not perceive. Hearing you hear, but you do not understand.

Look at Isaiah 42 verse 18. Hear you deaf and look you blind that you may see. The servant has come and opened the blind eyes, has brought the prisoners out of the imprisonment, whether it's physical disability or religious insensitivity.

Christ has come and removed all of those obstacles. And he says, hear and look. Who is blind but my servant? Who is deaf as my messenger whom I send? God has to send Jesus Christ as his messenger, capital M, because the nation of Israel that is supposed to be a light to the Gentiles and supposed to be God's messenger on earth, supposed to be his incarnate word, his incarnate presence on earth, is blind and deaf.

And he's describing Israel in verse 19. Who is blind but my servant? Parentheses Israel. Who is as deaf as my messenger? Parentheses Israel.

Whom I send? Who is blind as he who is perfect? Who is as blind as the Lord's servant? Perfect means he's been given his sight. He's got eyes. There's nothing wrong with him.

He's not incomplete. He's not deficient. He's not short of senses.

But he doesn't see. He's got eyes and can't see. Look at verse 20.

Seeing many things but you do not observe. You do not comprehend. You do not grasp.

You see it, but it doesn't impress itself into your heart. Opening the ears, but he does not hear. Look at verse 23.

Who among you will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come? In chapter 43, he says, look, Israel, you're failing the commission. You're failing the commission, but it doesn't mean I'm going to cast you aside. Fear not.

I have redeemed you. I've called you by your name. You are mine.

I will preserve you. I will protect you. I gave Egypt for your ransom.

Verse 3, since you were precious in my sight, you have been honored and I have loved you and I've given men for your life. I will gather you. I will bring you back.

I will... Look at verse 8. Bring out the blind people who have eyes. Bring out the deaf people who have ears. This is Israel.

God's going to regather them. They are the blind and they are the deaf. He has given them eyes and he's given them ears and they don't use them.

And that makes them truly blind and truly deaf. Let the people be assembled. Who

among them can declare this and show us former things? They ought to be able to.

They ought to be God's messengers, but they're not. This is what blindness is. Blindness is not a genuine inability to perceive.

It is a refusal to perceive. It is a neglect of perceiving. Biblical blindness is a result, and I'm talking in the spiritual sense now, blindness and hardness come upon Israel.

Why? Because they reject the Word of God, both small w and capital W. Hardness has happened in part to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles come in. Why did it happen? Because when he came unto his own, his own received him not. You remember the value of this.

The key understanding of blindness is, it isn't, well, Lord, I would have seen you except I'm blind. I would have heard you, but I was born deaf. I don't, you came and were talking, but it's not my fault.

I'm deaf. I'm blind. I can't perceive.

In the Bible, blindness and deafness in the spiritual realm are a consequence of bad decisions, of rejection. It isn't inability. And this plays into your whole view of the understanding of scriptures when you get to, you know, reform theology and predestination and this sort of thing.

Has God blinded people so that they can't see and then he opens the eyes of some and then they see? Not at all. And this is one of the passages that reminds us of this. I have opened your eyes.

I have sent my servant and he has opened your ears. He has brought you the Word and here you are with eyes and ears and you still don't see and you still don't hear. Let them be assembled, the blind people who have eyes and the deaf who have ears.

Isaiah 43, 8. Look at verse 10 of that same chapter. You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servant who I have chosen that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. I am who? I am the Lord God.

When Jesus comes, I am the son of David. I am the Messiah. I am God's chosen one to bring deliverance and salvation.

Before me there was no God formed nor shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord and beside me there is no Savior. I have declared and saved.

I have proclaimed when there was no foreign God among you. Therefore you are my witnesses, O Israel, says the Lord that I am God. But look at verse 22.

You have not called upon me, O Jacob, and you have been weary of me, O Israel. You

have not brought me the sheep for your burnt offerings, nor have you honored me with your sacrifices. You brought me no sweet cane with money, nor have you satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices.

You have burdened me with your sins. You have wearied me with your iniquities. I am the one who blots out transgressions for my own sake.

I will not remember your sins. He reminds them again in chapter 44 that He has saved them. He has promised them.

He is not going to obliterate them. But their turning from Him is a problem. And it goes on through the chapter 44 and into chapter 45.

And He uses the figure of Cyrus who is coming. Verse 9 of chapter 45, Woe to him who strives with his maker! Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that formed it, What are you making? Shall your handiwork say, He has no hands? What is the problem here? The clay is insensible to the purpose of the potter.

It doesn't feel like, if you will, it doesn't choose to hold the form the potter is trying to give it. God formed Israel to be His witness and be His servant. He has given them eyes and given them ears.

When they went blind and deaf, He reopened their eyes. He reopened their ears. And they are still people with ears and eyes who don't see.

This is what we want to avoid. We want to learn from the mistakes of others. Has God revealed Himself in His Word? Have we been to Bible class? Do we understand the truths of God's Word? We do.

But are we prone to be, since we are made out of the very same clay as Israel, are we prone to stop looking with our working eyes and stop hearing with our working ears and be standing there and good has come and we are like the shrub in the desert who doesn't see good when it comes. And not seeing the good when it comes isn't because we are blind by birth or by accident or by deficit. We are perfect.

God says, Behold My servant, he is perfect. But he doesn't see and he doesn't hear. What does that leave as a cause? Choice.

We have chosen to be apathetic. We have chosen to be indifferent. We have chosen to look elsewhere.

That is why in the middle of Isaiah 45 you have the note of idolatry and the futility of it. The blacksmith with the tongs making idols. The guy taking a cypress and an oak and carving it.

He is going to cook his food with part of it and he is going to make the rest of it into an

idol and bow down and worship it. It is all the work of his own hands. Well, all of this plays into, this is the biblical and it is just a taste.

There are so many passages on blindness we don't have time to cover them all. But remember the value, the significance, the teaching point of blindness in the Bible. It isn't who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind.

No, this is for the glory of God. Because when God takes away blindness and you can see, what do you do with it? That man in John 9 that we are going to see, the man born blind. What does he do when he can see? He draws conclusions.

He says, here is what I know. He uses his sight and he advances. What are these guys going to do when they get their sight? Jesus said to them, do you believe that I am able to do this? And they say yes.

And he touches their eyes. This is a reminder of the incarnation. This is a reminder of Jesus coming to that generation in Israel and offering the kingdom.

It's contact. Emmanuel, God with us. He has touched that generation.

He walks among them and he says, according to your faith, let it be to you. Now this is kind of a sober thought because could these guys have walked back out just as blind as when they came in? According to your faith, let it be to you. Well, we were really just kind of hoping.

We were kind of throwing the dice here. We figured, what have we got to lose? Nothing else going on today. We'd follow you and give it a shot.

But I don't know who you are. I don't know if you've really got the power or not. If that had been their attitude and Jesus says, well, according to your faith, let it be to you.

Got no faith, got no sight. So what quality of faith do these men have? Do they have a genuine faith? Do they really believe he's the son of David? Do they really believe that he's able to do this? Yes, they do. Are there those in Israel who really believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God? Do they believe that he is the Messiah? Yes, they do.

And that's good. Even the demons believe and tremble, right? There's certain things you can believe. What is the concomitant for faith? Are there things that you believe or things that we've seen throughout the pages of God's word and you believe them? You believe Jesus came? You believe he's the son of God? You believe God's in his heaven? There's a creator? We didn't all get here by a happy accident of cosmic evolution? You believe that Noah was in the ark? You believe the things that are told us in God's word? That's great.

These guys believe. And it is demonstrated by the fact that their eyes were opened. They've got genuine faith.

And that's great. Great. Jesus then gives them a command.

He asks them a question, then he gives them a command. When their eyes are opened, he says, see that no one knows it. See that no one knows it.

Here's a couple of blind guys. See that no one knows it. Now, if you turn over to Matthew chapter 20, we have, and we'll get here eventually, I just want to pull a couple of details out of this now.

Matthew chapter 20 verse 29. Now, as they went out of Jericho, this is the Zacchaeus time. As they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

Behold, two blind men sitting by the road. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, and what did they say? Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David. All the same words spoken by these two blind men.

Right? The multitude warned them that they should be quiet, but they cried out all the more, repetitive crying out, just like before. Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David. So, what's the difference? Does Jesus pass on by and they've got to get up and follow him and tap their way to the house and come in and have this conversation? It's different.

Jesus stood still and called them and said, what do you want me to do for you? Is this the question he asked the first guys? What did he ask the first ones? Do you, two guys, individually, do you believe that I am able to do this? What is the nature of your individual faith? Right? And they express it, and he says, let it be to you according to that faith, and their eyes are opened. Great. These guys, he says, what do you want me to do for you? Well, blind guys, have mercy on us, and he says, what do you want? What are you seeking? Do you want me to come over and give you a Bible class? Do you want me to explain the kingdom? Do you want me to, do you want to be with me in paradise, like the thief on the cross? What do you want? They said to him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

So Jesus had compassion, and what did he do? Touched their eyes. What does the touching signify? It is a reminder of what? The bodily, visible, manifest incarnation and presence of the Messiah to Israel, fulfillment of all of the Old Testament promises. Couldn't do it if he wasn't incarnate.

He touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight and they followed him. Now, in the first story, what is the sort of determining factor in the healing? What is the thing that makes the healing, what does Jesus condition the healing on? Your faith, right? What's the faith of these two blind guys? What do you want me to do for you? Lord, open our eyes. They've called him son of David, called him Lord, just like the first two, but

what is the detail in the passage, what is the issue here? Does he say, let it be to you according to your faith? Jesus had compassion.

It is the compassion of the Lord Jesus that is behind this healing. So many other details are the same, but there are a few that are different. In the first, they come to him, and it's a private audience.

How many people see the healing? It's not even in the other Gospels. The one we're looking at this morning in Matthew 9, it's not in Mark, not in Luke, not in John. The only place you find it is Matthew.

It's private. It's inside the house. Where does this take place? In 20.

Outside, in public, these guys are hollering out. Everybody hears it. What's the difference? Early on in Jesus' ministry, he appeals to individuals.

I've done this for you. Tell no man. It's not the time for a public proclamation.

Jesus travels about looking for those individuals who will express faith. I've compared this in the past to sort of a grassroots political campaign. You go out door to door.

You shake hands. Many people have known very famous guys who went on to become presidents, but they met them at their door back when they were just a congressman or they were representing a state district somewhere, and these guys are just wearing out shoe leather door to door, shaking hands, kissing babies. But they're looking people in the eye.

They're answering questions at an individual level, and they're building a base. They are finding people who will support them, who can gather together to become a movement, to become a group. What is Jesus doing with the Bride of Christ? When you get saved, do we move to Salt Lake City and join a big tabernacle and become one of a white robe number, and we're just waiting for the rest of the people to arrive, and when the entire bride is assembled, then Jesus is going to come back? Jesus is doing now what he's doing here in Matthew chapter 9. It is an individual appeal.

Jesus comes via the Holy Spirit. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. Are you going to invite me in? Remember, I told you, remember the passage back in Isaiah? A bruised reed he will not break.

He will not raise his voice in the street. He's not making a corporate appeal. Let's draw a crowd.

Let's march on City Hall. Let's all get together and have a movement and have a rally. It's an individual appeal in this phase of the church, just as it was in the early days of his ministry.

He went village to village, town to town, person to person, house to house, individual appeals, and that's why in the earlier miracles he says, tell no man. Later on, very similar situation, two blind guys. Jesus doesn't take them off by themselves.

He addresses them publicly, heals them publicly, talks to them publicly, and it is an expression not designed to bring out the nature of individual faith, but Jesus' compassion. He's going to stand and weep over all of Jerusalem and express compassion. How long I would have gathered you all under my wings as a hen gathers her chicks, but you all would have none of me.

So these details are important. For us, we are someday going to be in the corporate realm. When he came to his own, his own received him not.

That's corporate. There are individuals to whom he came and they did receive. When he comes to us individually, it's a matter of individual faith.

As I've said many times, the judgment seat of Christ, we're not going to answer for the deeds of our church. We're not going to partake of the efforts of others. While I was in that church, I put a nickel in the plate, and so I get a portion of what they did.

God is dealing with us individually. Individually, do we have eyes? Individually, do we have ears? Individually, am I hearing? Not, am I part of a group that listens and hears? Do I individually? The group thing comes later. In his later ministry, Jesus will go public, so to speak, make a public appeal.

So, very interesting to compare these two. So, once there is the giving of ability, and this happens to us at the point of salvation, we're given the Holy Spirit, we are given a pneuma, Jesus becomes to us wisdom as well as peace and sanctification. Now our eyes are open.

Now our ears can hear. Our hearts have the mechanism for receiving. Remember, some of you have heard it called the grace apparatus for perception? That's what he was talking about.

At salvation, we are given the means of seeing and hearing and understanding God's truth. Our eyes are open. So, what kind of servant are we going to be? Who is as blind as my servant, whose eyes I have opened? Who is as deaf as my servant, whose ears I have opened? He's deaf because he chooses to not see, because he chooses to look at other things.

He's blind and deaf because he ignores the truth that he has been given the ability to perceive. It's an individual capacity, it is an individual potential, and it is an individual judgment. There are commands.

Once you can see, Jesus says, here's what to do and here's what not to do. He tells them,

see that no one knows it. See that no one knows it.

Make sure you do not noise this abroad. Jesus makes three statements. If you have a red letter Bible here, you've got one red line in 28, one red line in 29, and one red line in 30.

There is a question, there is a statement, and there is a command. See that no one knows it is the command. If you look at all the italics there, you have see no one knows.

In Greek, this is meides ginasketos, which is from ginosko. The knowledge of it to no one is what he tells them. He prefaces it with horao, and this is an imperative.

He's given them sight, and he doesn't say don't tell anyone. He says see, horao. That's where we get the word horizon.

Horao, and it's an imperative. See with your newfound sight that no one knows. With your newfound sight, follow my command.

My command is, you may not understand why people shouldn't know. Jesus knows that he's in the individual appeal phase of his ministry. It's not time to go public, not time to create crowds.

He's looking for individuals. So he gives them a command. They don't necessarily understand it, therefore they don't obey it.

What does he mean, see that no one knows? Why do you think Jesus walked all the way to where he could have privacy? Why do you think he made them follow? It demonstrates their persistence, which is good. It shows their faith, which is good. But their persistence and their faith do not work themselves out in what? Obedience.

Persistence is useless. Faith is unproductive where there is no obedience. We can see, and we can persist, but if we do not apply, if we do not obey, it may not make sense to us.

I don't understand why God wants me to do this. I just don't see the reason for it. He wants me to have a reasonable faith.

I don't see the reason. I'm not going to do it. Why shouldn't people know what a great Lord Jesus is? Why shouldn't we go out and proclaim it? Maybe he's just being modest.

I'll reinterpret it to my own whims. And of course this makes them celebrities as well. Hey, we're the formerly blind guys.

Jesus says, see, hora-o, gives them a command directly related to what he's just done. See that no one knows it. And they immediately do the exact opposite.

This cannot be us. We can't let this be us. We see, God has given us eyes to see and ears

to hear.

We have the Holy Spirit. We've got the truth of God's Word. We've got wonderful revelations in Scripture.

What are we doing with them? We're very persistent. We show up in Bible class. We think.

We meditate. We pray. But the fruit of these things has to be obedience.

We lay hold of righteousness by faith, and that righteousness is good works that God hath foreordained that we should walk in them, that they should characterize our life. And the plant is going to start with a seed that gets planted in receptive soil, and it's going to spring up, but it's not going to produce anything without obedience. Good, strong plant.

Nothing more frustrating to a woman than to plant a flowering plant, and it grows, and it gets real big and leafy. No flowers. It didn't bloom this year.

The sun's not right. The soil's not right. Wait till next year.

Cultivate it, trim it, prune it. Well, it's a big old healthy plant, but it didn't produce. We've got a wonderful apple tree here.

No apples. We've got a wonderful peach, pear. No fruit.

The fruit is obedience. And it may be that we don't understand why we're doing what we do. God says, don't commit sins of the tongue.

We think, but this needs to be known. People need to know how the cow ate the cabbage here. They need to know what the situation is.

I need to justify myself. I need to explain. I need to, well, we look at Scripture to see what it is we should say.

And sometimes the Scripture says, don't talk. It's our application. Jesus said, God has done great things for you.

Don't tell anyone. Don't walk around identifying yourself as the formerly blind. See that no one knows.

They just disregard it. This is Israel. Israel had a form of godliness, but denied the power because the power is in obedience.

They discarded the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own by a different kind of works, meeting a different standard. They're condemned in Romans 8, 9, and 10, 9, 10, and 11. You look at that whole section.

That's their problem. They've got their own idea of what righteousness is. So this is a powerful, it's a very short miracle, but it's very powerful in its application.

Our eyes have been opened. Our ears have been opened. What are we going to do with this capacity? Jesus says, see, but guard your tongue.

Only gives them one command. And they flagrantly flout it. Well, oddly enough, the very next set of verses there, in 32 and following, as they went out, notice, as Jesus went out from there, here come the blind men.

And as they went out from Peter's house, behold, they brought to him a man mute and demon-possessed. When the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. The multitudes marveled, saying, It was never seen like this in Israel.

And the Pharisees say he did it by means of a demon. There's one point to this very brief notation. This is also the only place it's noted.

It's here in Matthew 9 about this demon-possessed man. A couple of miracles back, we saw a blind and mute man. The demon possessed him, and when cast out, he spoke.

When Jesus wants someone to speak, they'll speak. Here's a given back the power of speech when Jesus removes the demon. It was never seen like this in Israel.

It doesn't say we never heard this in Israel. It was never seen like this in Israel. It's what you perceive and what you do with that perception.

These people see this, but seeing, they do not perceive. A lot to chew on in this section. Well, we want to be people not only of faith, but of obedience.

This is James's great theme. You say you have faith. I will show you my faith in what I do.

Faith without works, without obedience is dead, being fruitless. Father, thank you for the truth of your Word. Thank you for the powerful way these episodes and the record of the sayings and actions of the Lord Jesus convict us and instruct us and shine a light on our path to show us how we can live and how we can make best use of the stewardship entrusted to us of time and opportunities.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will continue to impress these things on our hearts and lead us individually to see a path of obedience that expresses our faith and our understanding of your Word. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.