

Miracles of Jesus 12-10-21b

We pick up our study in John chapter 9, looking at the healing of the man born blind. As Jesus passed by, he saw a man who was blind from birth. As we pass by, we often see things that remind us of the fallenness of humanity, the fallenness of nature, the fallenness of our own nature, and we recognize that this is an opportunity.

This is a place where the works of God can be revealed. Then Jesus goes on in verse 4 to say, I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. Well, it's been a while since we covered the gospel of John, but if you remember the context, if you flip back to chapter 8, you have the pericope of the woman taken in adultery, and after that, verse 12, John 8, 12, Jesus spoke to them again saying, I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

He goes on to address the Pharisees in chapter 8, and the substance of that is, I am a witness. Jesus himself is evidence. He is a walking message.

Verse 18, I am one who bears witness of myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness of me. They said to him, Where is your father? Jesus answered, You know neither me nor my father. If you had known me, you would have known my father also.

In other words, really the reverse of that is what he is getting at. This is an Aramaic way of saying, if you had known my father, you would have recognized me. But it's presented in the reverse.

These words Jesus spoke in the treasury as he taught in the temple. Then in verse 21, he says, I am going away, and you will seek me, and will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come.

So the Jews said, Will he kill himself? He says, Where I go, you cannot come. He says, You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world.

Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am he, and you remember that classic I am, there he is in italics, you will die in your sins. If you do not believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.

They said, Well, who are you? Jesus said to them, Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. Verse 31 and 32, If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. But that of course, people always like to quote 32 without 31.

If you abide in my word, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If

you abide. As with so many of the promises, it is conditional.

But this idea of the light of life, of being a witness to the Father, and of those who do not believe in that witness, they will die in their sins, precedes. You look at verse 42. The Jews say, We were not born of fornication.

We have one Father, God. Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth and came from God, nor have I come of myself, but He sent me. Why do you not understand my speech? Because you are not able to listen to my word.

You are of your Father the devil, and the desires of your Father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, speaks from himself, because he is a liar and the father of it.

But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Keep in mind, everything we read in chapter 9, this is the outworking of what Jesus said in chapter 8. Because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? He who is of God hears God's words.

Therefore, you do not hear, because you are not of God. You do not believe in Christ, because you do not accept God. This goes back to the point of God consciousness.

This goes back, in the case of the Jews, to believing in the God of Abraham, but not believing God's word. And they miss the Lord Jesus, because they miss the word of God, because even though they are named the people of God, they are not walking as the people of God. They are like so many other generations in Israel.

The Jews answered and said in verse 48, Do we not rightly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon? This is so consistent, and you see it again in chapter 9. If you speak a truth, and people reject that truth, they not only dismiss the truth, but they attack the messenger. And you get an ad hominem reply. You're wrong, and your mother wears army boots.

You're wrong, and you're stupid. You're wrong, and that's what we would expect of you, because fill in the negative blank. Any discourse you have, especially with your unbelievers, and even ne'er-do-well believers, you find that the conversation very quickly turns ad hominem, against the man.

It won't stay with the issue. Find this in political debate. You've seen it all through this election season.

And it is wrong on either side. If you disagree with some political leader, or someone who holds office in our government, stick with the policies, stick with the statements. Don't

decide that the president is a Muslim, or start casting aspersions on the person.

This is wrong. It's always been wrong. It was wrong in the previous administration when they threw rocks at President Bush.

It was wrong when they threw personal rocks at President Clinton. When you're looking at him as a president, look at his record. Look at his policies.

Look at what he pushes for, what he tries to accomplish. This is legitimate grounds for criticism. But mixing in the personal is always a sign of weakness.

It means you don't have a case when it comes to the truth, and so you default to attacking the person. And it's weak. You can generally make a pretty good case for your side if you just look at the issues.

And it ought to stay on that level. So, Jesus says, I do not have a demon, in verse 49 of chapter 8 of John. I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.

I do not seek my own glory. There is one who seeks and judges. Most assuredly I say to you, If anyone keeps my word, he shall never see death.

Then the Jews said to him, Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham is dead, and the prophets. And you say, If anyone keeps my word, he shall never taste death.

Are you greater than our father Abraham who is dead, and the prophets who are dead? Who do you make yourself out to be? Well, he culminates in verse 58. Most assuredly I say to you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then they took up stones to throw at him.

But Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. That probably calls for a miracle study in and of itself. Jesus hid himself.

This is along the lines of the old cloak of invisibility. Jesus passed through the midst, and they could not see him. That's miraculous.

It doesn't get listed as a miracle, but it is. But this literally fulfills what Jesus has been saying. They cannot see Jesus for who He is.

And at the conclusion of the discussion, they can't see Jesus at all. There's lots of ways He could have delivered Himself. He could have put them all to sleep.

He could have had one of the disciples yell fire and clear the building. But He becomes invisible. Why? Because it is a literal expression of what is spiritually true.

They cannot see who Jesus is. And He apparently becomes, if they see Him, they don't recognize Him anymore. When He walks out of this very angry mob, they just don't recognize Him.

And, of course, they literally did not, both spiritually and literally. So back to chapter 9 now. Man born blind.

Who sinned? This man or his parents that he was born blind. What does Jesus state? What is the answer to this question? This is a false conclusion to draw. Somebody committed personal sin, and that's why this man is suffering.

Someone screwed up. Someone got on God's bad side, and so this man was born blind. Since he was born blind, he hadn't had a chance to do anything, so it must be the parents that sinned.

And this question really hinges on, does God anticipate what a bad rascal this guy was going to be and struck him blind even before he came into the world because he was such a big sinner and God knew it ahead of time? So was it this man's sins in prospect that caused God to make him blind, or was it after the fact and therefore the sins of the parents? And Jesus says, neither. There are many things that are wrong in the world, and they are not retributive. They are not judgments.

They exist to create a potential for the works of God to be seen. Then Jesus says in verse 4, For I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work.

What is it Jesus said in chapter 8? I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. Now Jesus says the daylight is only going to persist for a period, for a short time.

As long as I'm in the world, I am the light of the world. But the night is coming when no one can work. What does this mean? The night is coming when no one can work.

Well, there are two, as is so often the case in Scripture, there are two pertinent meanings for what Jesus says. First, I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. What day is here at first blush? This is during Jesus' earthly life, right? I must work the works of Him who sent Me.

We're not talking about works that Jesus did before or after the incarnation. Him who sent Me. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day.

While I am in the time of having been sent. I.e., the incarnation. During this period, there are works that must be done and I must work them.

That's what Jesus is saying. So this particular day is defined by the period of time that Jesus is on the earth. And the night is coming when no one can work.

You would say, well, the night is when Jesus is no longer here. And these works, the works of God, are done in the day. Okay, so far so good.

But in thinking about this, if it says no one can work, why doesn't He say the night is coming when I cannot work? He says, well, when the night comes, no one can work. Well, this is somewhat puzzling. So, we think about our own time on this earth.

This is the time of day. This is our chance to do works. Good works that God has foreordained that we should walk in them, right? So there is a span of lifetime.

That's our day. Jesus' lifetime was His day. And the night comes.

Once your sun sets, your time of doing works is over. Every man will be judged according to his works. To those who by patient continuance and well-doing seek for glory, honor, and immortality, there is the reward of eternal life.

And not just in duration. This has to do with parts of eternal life, privileges in eternal life, opportunities and potentials in the eternal future. Eternal life, everlasting life, is the gift of God through Christ, through faith.

But the reward aspect is what is the quality? What are the details? What is the level of access and potential and opportunity in the eternal future? And that is based on what we do. Different than our discussion of Ephesians 2, 8 and 9. Being saved and looking at this still as all of grace. Even when we do the works of God, the only reason there is a reward is the grace of God.

So, I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work. Now, how about the blind man? How much daylight does he see? None whatsoever.

When your eyes are closed and shut and inoperable, there is no daylight. We typically sleep at night. It's dark.

We open our eyes and we work during the day. That's not true for everyone, but it's a truism. The night is coming when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. So, there are three repercussions. The first one is, this is talking about the span of Jesus' incarnation.

He's got to do the works that He was called to do, that are a part of the plan of God while He's in the world. And He did that to perfection. He healed those who needed healing.

He taught those who needed teaching. He went to the cross and accomplished our salvation. He offered the kingdom to Israel and saw it rejected.

Everything that God called Him to do in His day, He did. He worked the works of the day. He was about His Father's business from the outset.

The second repercussion is our application. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, the time

that we spend on this earth is our day. And we have a calling.

And we have the opportunities as we pass by to work the works that reflect the glory of God. That's our calling. The third and even larger envelope of this is the time from the cross forward.

The Lord Jesus was in the world until the ascension and then He left. And yet at Pentecost, with the descent of the Holy Spirit and the inception of the church age, you have the presence of Christ again in the earth. And Jesus foretold this in the upper room when He said, And the one who has my words and keeps them, he is the one that loves me.

And I and my Father will come to him and make our home with him. That's Jesus on the earth. Revelation 3.20, Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

This is church age. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with me. Now we have not gone to heaven when that is fulfilled.

So who moved? Jesus has come and is in personal individual fellowship with the believer who opens the door and invites the Lord Jesus in. This is not salvation. This is post-salvation fellowship.

That's why we don't tell people to ask Jesus into their heart to get saved. You don't ask Jesus in. Jesus is asking to come in.

He is the one knocking. We don't open the door, stand on the threshold and say, Jesus, Jesus, are you in the neighborhood? Please come in. There's no asking Jesus into your heart or into this room that's got the door.

Jesus is standing knocking at the door and it is our obligation. It is our opportunity to open that door and allow him in for fellowship. This is a fellowship thing.

There's no blood on the doorpost. There's no picture of salvation. It's fellowship.

So that is the historical picture. We have Jesus himself and his day. We have our life and our day, the time allotted to us.

And then in history, we have the day of the post-incarnation time in history where Jesus is on the earth. Now when is that day going to end? We've just seen it in 2 Thessalonians. That time will not come for the man of lawlessness to be revealed except the apostasia comes first, the standing away.

Now you know what it is that restrains until it is taken out of the way. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in and among his people.

Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst. It's not there am I

looking down from heaven. There am I in the midst.

We as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ maintain, sustain, reflect, represent the presence of Christ in the earth. And when we leave at the rapture, now it is night and no one can do the works anymore. And you've got a different age and a different time and a different call and you're eventually going to have the 144,000 servants of God.

But that's a whole different paradigm, different issue, different mission, different dispensation, the 70th week of Daniel. Jesus here says, I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work.

And the time of the 70th week is not a time of fruitful works, of beneficence. It is a time of judgment. And those 144,000, 12,000 from each tribe are going to be preaching a message of conviction and of deliverance.

But that is not a seven-year period of fruitfulness and reflecting the glory of God. This is a time of survival, a time of response in the midst of judgment. This is scrambling into the ark before the door shuts at Armageddon and at the inception of the millennial age.

It's a completely different thing. The works of God that need to be worked have to be worked now in this day before the night comes at the departure of God's people in Christ, the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit dwelling in the temple of God, which is us, and the presence of Christ himself and God the Father. I and my Father will come and make our home.

All three members of the Trinity are evacuating the premises at the rapture. That's why those are going to be such dark days. So all three are kind of in view there.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. Is Jesus in the world today? Well, you remember the song, He Lives? I serve a risen Savior. He's in the world today.

And He is. He's in the world in and through us, in and through the presence of the Word. So, when He had said these things and He stopped to make this point, He didn't try to get their attention after the blind man wanders off looking for the Pool of Siloam.

He said it first. Why? Because this isn't just fixing a poor guy's bad eyes. This man is blind from birth.

What does it immediately suggest to you? David said, I'm conceived in iniquity, I'm born in sin, the nation of Israel. From the outset, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has been struggling to arrive at the place where there is relationship with God. But without the ubiquitous ministry of the Holy Spirit, was the Holy Spirit given to everyone in the Old Testament? That was the new covenant.

Behold, the days are coming. I make this promise to those in Judah and to those in Israel.

The day is coming when I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.

Why is that such a great promise? Why is that the new covenant? Because in the old covenant, coming to faith in God did not bring the presence of the Holy Spirit. It was an endowment and a gift to the tabernacle workmen, to the kings in Israel, to the prophets, to the judges on occasion. But it was a temporary manifestation and presence.

And it came and it went. This is why David could say, O Lord, take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. It wasn't a permanent presence.

It wasn't a, we just take it for granted. Oh, the Holy Spirit, to hear it never leaves. It's a tremendous gift.

But this man born blind, the things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned and the carnal mind cannot understand them. Why did Israel struggle so much? This is what human flesh is. Even when we know about God, even when we believe in God, in our own strength, in our own steam, with our own capabilities, we just can't get there.

And the whole age of Israel was a demonstration that it is not enough to know God and even believe in God. Without the grace of God enabling and empowering us in the person of the Holy Spirit, we are still hopeless, helpless, and useless. And look at Israel.

If you didn't have a Holy Spirit filled Moses or a Holy Spirit filled Joshua or a Holy Spirit filled judge or prophet or king, that's the only time the nation ever got anywhere. And it depended a lot on how susceptible and how obedient and how amenable that Holy Spirit filled individual was. When David is walking in the light of the Lord through the presence of the Spirit, he's a great king.

When he gets lazy and quits going out to battle and starts looking over the battlements at women bathing and so on, all kinds of trouble ensues. When he decides to number the army and doesn't obey the law of Moses about the half shekel tax, trouble ensues. It was a very dicey thing.

But the man born blind represents humanity with the inability to see the things of God, lacking spiritual sight. God called Israel to sight, but He said, seeing they see and do not perceive, hearing they hear and do not understand. They are blind.

The Pharisees are blind, Jesus says. If you acknowledged your sins, you wouldn't be blind. But because you say we see, your sins remain.

So the man born blind represents humanity in general and the nation of Israel in particular. So the man born blind. This is the way everybody starts.

This is the way Israel remains. And Jesus is here to work the works of His Father and one of those is to open blind eyes. Remember over in Isaiah, the prediction of the Messiah?

He will open the eyes of the blind.

He will unstop the ears of the deaf. The lame will walk. So when He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva.

We've already seen in the saliva miracle earlier when Jesus spit on the guy's eyes that that which comes from His mouth is at issue. It speaks of the word. This is what comes forth.

Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. What's the best way to physically represent what comes from the mouth? Saliva. By the way, why is saliva an unclean substance? Remember God said to Moses when Miriam was carping and criticizing and God struck her with leprosy and Moses made an appeal on her behalf and God said if her father had spit in her face she would be defiled.

Spit alone would defile. So He spat on the ground because the word of man is corrupt and that's why saliva was an unclean fluid. Anything else that is emitted from a human body is an unclean fluid because we are sin.

We are the embodiment of sin and anything that issues from us is a defiling substance. Blood was a defilement. Any other issue that you can think of was a defilement including saliva but not from the Lord Jesus.

Why? Because He speaks the word of God. His is the mouth of God and His saliva has the opposite effect because it represents the word of God. Now what does He do? He doesn't just apply it.

That was a different picture. Here He spits on the ground. The ground, the earth, this is what man is made of.

Dust thou art unto dust thou shalt return. What happens when the word of God is mixed with the dust of the ground? Now you've got something with power. Now you've got something with value.

The dirt wasn't any good by itself but when Jesus spits on the ground now it is sanctified. Now it is enabled and empowered. He made clay with the saliva but this is God-generated clay.

This is the kind of clay, you know, we can go make a mud brick. I was in grade school and learned about the previous inhabitants and the people in Mexico making adobe bricks and so I went and made a big mud hole in the backyard and I thought well this is the same, and sure enough you could make little bricks and dry them in the sun and I made little adobe bricks, made little miniature ones, made kind of a little Lincoln log house out of little tiny adobe bricks I made out of clay and baked them in the sun and it was a lot of fun. But they didn't come to life.

They didn't have volition. God took the clay and when He breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, man became a living soul. So this clay has got power like no other clay.

And He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. This is sort of a second creation. When's the last time God made something from the dust of the ground? God formed something from the dust of the ground.

It doesn't say that Jesus grew up as a potter. I thought that would have been a really cool vocation for Joseph to teach him as a boy. But he was a carpenter.

He was a blacksmith or something. He made implements of that nature. They don't know exactly what the word carpenter means.

But whatever it was, it was not a potter. Wouldn't that have just been all kinds of biblically significant if he had been a potter? But this is where Jesus sort of becomes a quick maker of clay and user of clay, former and shaper of clay. And it's the first time I can think of since Genesis where God made something from the dust of the ground.

And He applies it to the eyes and instead of the clay, of course, becoming a living soul, these eyes become living eyes. There is regeneration. There is new life for these dead eyes.

But there's a delay. He applies the mud and it doesn't happen immediately. It isn't an instantaneous vision.

Just like the last time when Jesus applied saliva to the guy's eyes, he didn't see right away. It was a two-step process and we talked about that. Here He says, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, which is translated sent.

Now, you saw up in verse 4, we had the word sent. I must do the works of Him who sent me. Now, in verse 7, we see the word sent once again.

The Greek word in verse 4 is pempo. The works of Him who sent me. Here it is apostelo.

Siloam, which is translated apostalmenos. And this is a perfect passive participle. Having been sent.

Apostalmenos. Having been sent. So He went and washed and came back seeing.

Well, what happens when there is a response of faith and obedience? Jesus doesn't even make a promise here, but the man obeys and his obedience is a sign of what? Why would he go find the pool of Siloam? Why wouldn't he just say, That is disgusting. What did you just put on my face and wipe it off? Who are you? This man has a positive response. And when Jesus says, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, the man believes that this is worth doing.

It's very understated, isn't it? So he goes and washes in the pool of Siloam. Jesus sends him to the pool. Sends him to the pool of having been sent.

Jesus, having been sent to bring deliverance and bring the light, now sends the man, and in faith the man obeys and goes to the pool of having been sent and having been sent by the one having been sent. You see the connection here. If you follow that connection back, what is the source? The pool of having been sent is visited by the man having been sent, by the Lord Jesus having been sent.

By who? What did Jesus begin this by saying before he ever did anything? I must work the works of God. The connection is Jesus is from God. This healing application is from God.

The pool is from God having been sent. The water having been sent. And how many times is the word of God represented by water? Whether it is a small amount of water from the mouth of the Lord Jesus or the pool of water having been sent.

And notice that this immediate speech of the Lord Jesus is accompanied by the water from the pool. What did the Apostle Paul do after he met the Lord Jesus on the road? And the Lord Jesus spoke a few words to him and he believed all of his Old Testament knowledge kicked in. All of the word of God, the pool of Salome that had been sent in the past, all came alive for him.

And he was, oddly enough, the man who had Pharisee training and knew more about the Jews than everybody, was sent to the Gentiles. And the other 11 who were just fishermen and dwellers and didn't know that much as Paul, didn't have an academic education, they were sent to Israel. Why? Israel didn't need a scholar of the law.

They'd had the law for 1400 years. They didn't need more scholarship in the law. That had been sent.

The pool of Salome is the pool of the word of God that they already had. And Jesus, speaking a few words, should have sent them to the word of God. That's how they should have been able to make the connection.

The word having been sent through the man having been sent by the Lord Jesus having been sent by God. And you trace that line of living water back, you find God. Jesus told these guys, you don't know me because you don't know God.

If you knew my father, you would know me. If you accepted my father, you would accept me. But you don't know him.

Doesn't say they don't believe in him, they don't know him. And all it should take is this little bit of extra water to open their eyes. But the eyes get opened seeing it from the pool, seeing it from the word of God.

Well, there's so much more in this passage, but here's our application. There are times when we are passing by and here is a challenge, here is a situation, it's a reflection of the fallenness of the world, the fallenness of our own nature. We mess up, we get ourselves in a jam, somebody else messes up and puts us in a jam.

There is some problem and some issue that comes up. We look at it first, what do we say? This is an opportunity. This is not a bad thing, this is an opportunity.

Opportunity for what? To see the works of God, to see God work his work of grace, of power, of transformation. So we look at it that way. And there is a little bit of word, there is a little bit of insight that comes in that moment.

Maybe it's a little thing we get from Bible class, maybe it's something that came from our, hopefully our meditation that we had early in the morning that day. There's a little bit of pertinent saliva that comes to that situation and what does it do? It drives us to the pool, everything that we've learned, everything that we know. This time you've spent, low these many years in Bible class, coming faithfully to church, listening to recordings, listening to the radio, reading books, meditating, notes in your Bible, reviewing your notes.

That's your pool of salome. When an issue comes up, we've got that little bit of a spark, we need a little bit of immediate application right there on our eyes. We need a little bit of the dirt and a little bit of the saliva.

We need this earthly situation mixed with the word of God and we go to the pool and our eyes are open and we see, ah, this is what's going on. Now we've got to pray over this. This isn't something we're good at.

It isn't something we know by nature. But meditating in the word of God, continually exposing ourselves, faithfully, diligently, paying attention to the word of God puts us in the position to where when Jesus says, go wash in the pool having been sent. The pool of what you've already got.

Take this and think back. You didn't waste your time with all those previous Bible classes. You didn't waste your time with all that previous knowledge and learning and application.

You've got a little bit right now, a little bit of dirt. Here's your immediate opportunity. Go to the pool.

Get all of the water. Dip your hands in it. Splash it in your face.

And you're going to come back seeing. And you look at how admirable this blind guy is, the formerly blind guy compared to the Pharisees. Look how much insight, how ready he is, how receptive he is to the word of the Lord Jesus, how well he stands up to these law-

trained, school-trained, university-degreed Pharisees.

This guy puts them all in the shade. You do not need a seminary degree. You do not need a college education for this.

All we need is to wash in the pool. And this man spiritually has the same kind of sight that he has physically because he just draws logical conclusions from what he knows. He says, I don't know if the man is a sinner.

Here's what I know. And he applies what he knows. If you know five things and apply them, you're ahead of somebody that knows 50 things and doesn't apply any of them.

That's who we want to be. Well, we're out of time for this morning, but we'll return to this really freighted, meagy, dense account in the Word of God next week. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word.

Thank You for its supernatural power to open our eyes and enable us to see the meaning and the purpose of our lives, the reason for the circumstances that arise that You have called us to face, that You have put in our path as we pass through and accomplish our daily tasks. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will illuminate these truths for us and enable us to see their pertinence and application individually and collectively as we move forward in the time that remains to us in the daylight that is still ours before this day is over and we move into that new day where the sun never sets. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.