

The Miracles of Christ - The Man Born Blind

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] Would you open your Bibles, please, to our current consideration of the miracles of our Lord? And this morning we will go to John's Gospel, chapter 9.

And we will consider what I think is one of the most engrossing and sometimes downright humorous accounts that is given regarding this incident of Jesus healing the man born blind.

Now we know, according to the Scriptures, especially according to the synoptics, that Jesus healed a number of people of different diseases, many of whom were blind.

But this is the only account we have in John's Gospel where he healed a man who was born blind.

That's perhaps the only distinction because the synoptics do not record this account.

And each of the writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, each approach the life of Christ from just a slightly different viewpoint with a different emphasis to make.

[1 : 11] And you will note that Matthew, Mark, and Luke that are called the synoptics, and the word synoptic is simply a compound word of the S-Y-N from which we get the word synonym, which means the same as, and then the optic has to do with your vision, your seeing, optical.

And when you put the synoptic together, it means to see the same as. So Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the synoptic Gospels because they make many of the same emphases but from a little different point of view and a little different emphasis.

But John is entirely different. John has a different agenda. And John's main thrust is to present Jesus as deity.

And that's why he begins his Gospel with, in the beginning was the Word, the Logos. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the same was in the beginning with God, and all things were made by him.

So John's emphasis is on setting forth not only the Messiahship of Jesus, but the fact that this Jesus is God in the flesh.

[2 : 25] He is Emmanuel. We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Beautiful thing. So in John chapter 9, we have a wonderful account, and we're going to begin with the very first verse.

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?

Now today we would say, well, that's a pretty dumb question. But back in those days, it was probably an almost anticipated question, because of the point of view that these people had regarding birth and being born with difficulties, because they actually believed that it was possible for an unborn child to sin, while yet in the womb of the mother.

And if that's what this man did, no doubt that's why he is born blind. It's because of sin he committed in the womb. We look at that today, and we say, well, that's just complete nonsense. But you know, there are a lot of things that men have adopted as truth down through the years that were complete nonsense. And they still do. I call it today, reasoning with a faulty intellect.

[3 : 50] And we see examples of that. We see a new one every month, whether it's defund the police or the critical race theory and all of this nonsense. Man is ever given to coming up with all kinds of harebrained ideas, and they issue forth from a fallen intellect that exercises warped logic.

That's how and why we have so many harebrained ideas about all kinds of things today. Humanity is under that curse. And when Adam and Eve fell, their intellect fell also, their ability to reason and think things through.

And that's why we get so many different cockamamie ideas about all kinds of stuff. So these guys thought that it was possible for a baby to sin in the womb.

And then some of them were also embracing the concept of the transmigration of the soul, much as Hindus do with the reincarnation concept.

And that was rather popular when Jesus was here during his earthly ministry. And you will recall when Jesus asked his disciples, who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?

[5 : 07] And some said, well, some think that you're John the Baptist. Come back from the dead. In other words, we know that John the Baptist was executed by Herod, and they believed.

Of course, they didn't know that John and Jesus both existed at the same time. And some of them reached the fallacious conclusion that it is Jesus who has come back from John the Baptist.

That's who he was in the former life. And you'll recall that even the king believed that at the time.

Herod, you remember the guy that was consorting with his brother's wife, and John read him out for it?

Herod, and it cost John his head. He was executed because of that. And Herod believed when he heard about Jesus, he believed that that's John.

That's John whom I executed. And he's come back in the form of Jesus. Well, of course, that's complete nonsense. But that was believed by many of them at that time. And that's exactly what they are referring to here.

[6 : 11] Who did sin? This man or his parents that he should be born blind. And they believed that the parents.

And by the way, there is some truth to this when you stop and think about it. There is some truth to the fact, the idea that a mother or a father may have engaged in some kind of behavior or activity that will have a profound effect on their offspring physically.

And I'm talking particularly of things like severe alcoholism and things like that. Some of these elements can be passed on to the next generation so that parental sin could actually impact the unborn child.

And we know and we hear all the time about how women who are pregnant, expecting, are warned against taking certain drugs, certain medications, or doing certain things because it can have a negative impact on the child that they're carrying.

So some of this is far-fetched and some of it is pretty much on track. That's scripture, isn't it? That the kids down the line can suffer because of what the parents did.

[7 : 29] Oh, yeah. That's scripture. Oh, absolutely. Moses talks about that, where sin can be visited to the third or fourth generation. Yeah. And it's not only a genetic thing, but it is also, what shall we say, it's also a social thing whereby the child can be impacted by negative conditions in the living situation and that can take a toll on the child and then they tend to pass that on.

So when they ask this question, Jesus answered and says, Neither did this man sin nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

Actually, long story short, what this all boils down to is Jesus is really saying that this man was born blind, the condition that he has for this precise time.

Now, we may look upon that from a human standpoint and say, You mean to tell me that the God of heaven arranged for this man, this poor man, to be born blind and live with that infirmity all those years just so Jesus could have this opportunity to heal him.

That's not fair. And that would be our pronouncement. But, fellas, once again, it would be just our ignorance that is coming to the fore because God isn't fair.

[9 : 11] God is righteous. There's a big difference. Fairness is a human thing. God doesn't deal in fairness. God deals in righteousness.

Sometimes they are the same. Sometimes they aren't. But fairness is more a concept of humanity. Righteousness is a concept of deity. And I think the scriptures make that quite clear.

And by the way, if we had an opportunity, and we may well have an opportunity, to ask this poor man when we see him in glory, What did you think about that? Don't you think you were quite put out to be blind all of those years just so that he would have considered it an absolute honor?

And I'm sure anybody who knows anything about the situation would do likewise. Actually, fellas, we function, we live, and we serve at the pleasure of our Creator.

And there is no better role that we can play than simply being submissive to him for his will for whatever it is. And I'm sure that this poor man would have had that same attitude.

[10 : 16] So Jesus answered and said, No, no, no, you don't understand. Neither did this man sin, nor his parents. What this is all about is so that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

We must work the works of him that sent me. And here is that phrase again, him that sent me. I told you before, and I'll repeat it because it's worthy of it.

If you want a wonderful little study that will really emphasize the person and work of Jesus and who sent him, go through John's Gospel, and every time you come to the phrase, him who sent me, or I came from him, or any time he mentions a connection with the Father and having sent him, make a note of it.

And if you get them all, in those 21 chapters, you will find 30 mentions of that very thing.

And you get the impression that this is an emphasis that John is making, the source of this man, Jesus of Nazareth, who he really was.

[11:31] So the works of God should be made manifest in him. We must work the works of him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work. And I think that simply means that Jesus is saying that opportunities must be capitalized on when they are presented because the time may come when they are gone, and you cannot capitalize on them.

But now he is saying this is an opportune time, and he is going to exercise the opportunity. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world. Now, those of us who are somewhat familiar, or maybe quite familiar with the person and work of Jesus, we are not at all put off by that statement.

He had every right to make it. But when you say something like that, in the average crowd, in the average time, I am the light of the world.

What are you going to think of that person? You're going to think, in order for this guy to make a claim like that, he's got to be an absolute nut.

Or, he is the light of the world. Those are your options. You don't really have any others unless you want to assign to him the idea, well, Josh McDowell pointed out in his book, Evidence That Demands a Verdict, that Christ is either a liar or a lunatic, in which case, he called himself the light of the world, not because he was, but just because he thought he was.

[13:13] So he had delusions of grandeur. He was totally wrong, but he really believed that. In which case, he would be a lunatic. Or, the third option is, he's the Lord.

So he's a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord. Those are your three options. I can't think of any other. But his being the Lord is the only one that fits.

And that's the one, of course, that Christians embrace. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world. And of course, he's talking about moral and spiritual lightness.

And when he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed his eyes with the clay.

Now, try and visualize that scene if you can and try to mentally work your way through it. Here Jesus spits on the ground.

[14:17] And then he reaches down, stoops down, and stirs with his finger the saliva, making a pasty, muddy-like concoction.

Isn't this weird? And then he takes that and smears it on the eyelids of this blind man. And this blind man, being blind, he has no idea what's taking place.

He doesn't, he doesn't have any idea what Jesus is doing. He probably didn't know that he spat on the ground, couldn't see him, and he mixed it with his fingers. And then he takes the clay and puts it on his eyelids like that.

And this guy is saying to himself, what is this? What's, what's he, what's he doing? Anyway, what's going on? And he can't see a thing. You've got to remember this poor man's blind as a bat. And all Jesus tells him is, go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation sent the word, which is what the word means in Hebrew.

Go wash in the pool of Siloam. Well, how's he going to get there if he's blind? But however, however old this man is, and we don't know exactly how old he is, but we do know, according to his parents, he's well past what you would consider the, the, the age where he could speak for himself.

[15:45] And there is every likelihood that he was very familiar with the area. Blind people have an incredible ability to make connections and associations with things and objects in their presence when they have to without any sight.

It is amazing, it is amazing what blind people can experience and appreciate even though they can't see it. And this man, however old he is, was very accustomed to being blind, feeling his way around.

He may have even, the text doesn't say it, but he may have had even someone say, hey, come on along, I'll help you take my arm. And they may have led him to the pool of Siloam, I don't know. The text says that he went to the pool of Siloam, and the text tells us as we read on, go wash in the pool of Siloam, he went away therefore and washed and came seeing.

Now all this poor man is doing is just following orders, and I suspect that the reason he's following orders is because he has, by way of hearsay, heard about this man, Jesus, can't see him, wouldn't be able to identify him, and he doesn't even know exactly who this is.

And, well, let's read on and let the text speak for itself. He came seeing, and the neighbors therefore, and they which saw him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, is not this he that sat and begged?

[17 : 28] Hey, isn't this so and so? And some said, yeah, that's him. Others said, no, no, that's not him because he's blind. This guy can see. That's not him.

This is somebody that just kind of looks like him. And they're arguing over whether this is the same guy or not. And after a while, he's listening to all this, and he's seeing with 20-20 vision, and he says, hey, I'm he.

I'm the guy. Yeah, I'm the same one. And, of course, they're all stunned by this. And they said, therefore, unto him, well, how then were thine eyes opened?

There's just no explanation for that. And he answered, the man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said unto me, go to Siloam and wash.

So I went away and washed, and I received sight. Yes, Don? Don? When I keep reading it, I keep thinking in my mind, do you think this was theatrics?

[18 : 41] Why didn't he just touch his eyes? Why do what he did? Is this sort of a play to the crowd, so to speak? I don't know. It always bothered me a little bit.

I don't know that there is a crowd here. You don't do anything that it isn't. Yeah, we have no reason to believe that there is a crowd here, but the disciples were there, and it is true that Jesus used different methods for healing with the eyes, and some, he would just say, be opened, and they could see, and some, he touched, and some, he made clay with spittle, and my suggestion is, and this is just my suggestion, that he is demonstrating that he is not limited to any methodology.

He can do this any way that he wants, and some said that actually, this provided the basis for the first three denominations, the speakers, the touchers, and the spitters.

You're lined up behind one of those, which is kind of ridiculous, but this is a, this is a kind of humor that can be injected into something like, Jesus is just exercising absolute, total lordship over everything he says and does, and he could have just said, be opened, in the same way he could have said, when he created Adam from the dust of the ground, he could have just said, abracadabra, or whatever, and there he stands upright, and all the organs functioning, and everything, he could have done that, but the text says that he formed him from the dust of the ground, and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and Adam became a living soul.

So, God is not limited in his creative ability to do anything he wants, any way he wants to do it, and when you have absolute control and sovereignty over everything, nothing is limited to you.

[20 : 49] The only thing, of course there are a number of things that God cannot do, and one is he cannot deny himself, he cannot lie, he cannot, God cannot square a circle, God cannot make a rock so big he can't lift it, all of these are contradictory, nonsensical things that some would impose on God as a limitation, but, okay, let's go on of the text, so this man came away seeing, and he says, I am he, and they said, how then were your eyes open?

He answered, the man that is called Jesus made clay, anointed my eyes, and said unto me, go to Siloam and wash, so I went away and washed and I received sight.

What do you think would have happened if this man had said to himself, oh, this is crazy, I'm not going to, I'm not going to, I'm not going to make my way down there and wash my eyes in the pool of Siloam and why there might be people looking there and laughing at me and wondering, what's this all about?

And I'm not going to do that. Well, I think that his situation would have probably been the same as Naaman when he was asked to take those seven dips in the Jordan River and he says, ah, I've dipped six times, I'm not going to do it the seventh time, this is crazy.

I don't think he would have had the end result that he wanted, the healing. So, when God gives an order, you either follow it or you suffer the consequences that come from not following it and this man obviously had some degree of confidence or had heard about this man, Jesus and he knew

who it was, he knew his name was Jesus and he'd obviously heard about him.

[22 : 29] so, then they said, where is it? And the guy said, I don't know, I don't know. I left him such and such and I came to the pool and I don't know where he is.

Then they bring to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind and not all the Pharisees were bad guys but most of the Pharisees and the Sadducees constituted what could aptly be called the deep state of Israel at the time if you get my drift.

These guys were the entrenched deal makers the shakers and movers and they were as corrupt well, I would say that they were as corrupt as Washington D.C.

but that might be stretching it. I don't know they were that corrupt but corruption is everywhere guys.

Corruption is not a democratic problem and it's not a republican problem it's a human problem.

Every nation throughout the world is fraught through and through with corruption and our own is no different because it's like I said it's a human problem and Jesus is dealing with corruption in the state of Israel back 2,000 years ago and the Pharisees asked him how he received his sight and he said unto them he put clay upon mine eyes and I washed and do see.

[24 : 07] Some therefore of the Pharisees said this man is not from God because he keeps not the Sabbath. It was considered inappropriate and a violation of the Mosaic law to heal or to practice healing arts on the Sabbath.

Now the text has not said that it was the Sabbath but I think we can safely surmise that it was because that's the accusation that they are making and if it were not the Sabbath he would not have said that I don't think.

And by the way as you go through the Gospels it becomes rather apparent that Jesus did a number of the things that he did deliberately on the Sabbath and I don't know that it was deliberately to rankle the scribes and the Pharisees and upset them or if he was just so accustomed to addressing human pain and human misery he didn't pay attention to the day that it was whichever but we do know that a statement that Jesus made is one that adds to what we talked about earlier about his sovereignty as regards the Sabbath Jesus said of himself I am the Lord of the Sabbath now that is actually as blasphemous as I am the light of the world as well as I am the bread of life that would be as blasphemous as anything else unless it were true and when he designates himself as saying I am the

Lord of the Sabbath you realize the implications of that well absolutely I'm the one that established the Sabbath and then he said and by the way which one of you if you have a poor dumb animal that falls into a ditch on the Sabbath and is in pain and cannot extricate itself you will call your neighbors in and do whatever is necessary to get that poor animal out of pain and out of that ditch wouldn't you do that and they're thinking well yeah I guess we would and Jesus is saying can I not show the same compassion for a human being and of course he put them down and this is another reason why they developed such a hatred for Jesus is because every time they did combat verbal combat with him he always really made them look bad simply by speaking the truth it wasn't that he tried to make them look bad he just did it automatically because they were in a wrongful position and he called them out each time and they resented that and you know something fellas we've got the same situation we're talking about a human nature problem today we've got the same kind of situation in political conflict right here in the good old

US of A there are a number of people and I don't care what your politics are it doesn't make any difference there are a number of people who absolutely in Washington who absolutely despised Donald Trump they resent right up to the top of their head they resent so many of the things he was able to accomplish in Washington for crying out loud as an outsider the guy wasn't even connected and he got all kinds of things done that made them look bad and when you put their track record alongside his in four meager years and again I'd say I don't care what your politics are facts are facts they were embarrassing to them and they resent him and I think the thinking was we cannot afford this man for another four years and they had to do whatever they could to eliminate the truth hurts of course it does the truth hurts if you're not on its side the truth comforts if you are and as one brother put the cat does not like its fur rubbed the wrong way you ever try that on a cat don't rub the fur on the cat the wrong way what's the solution the solution is for the cat to turn around that's the solution is for the cat to turn around but when it comes to being found that you're wrong embarrassed by it you can dig your heels in and say

[29 : 03] I don't care I'm going to plunge ahead onto destruction or you can be humble and actually grateful that your error was pointed out swallow hard and say I guess I was wrong and turn around

and go the other way that's what repentance is when you change your mind and conversion means to go the other way to convert to return and go the opposite way so it's the human problem that we're talking about and let's get on with this text Pharisees ask him how he received his sight he said to them he put clay upon mine eyes I washed and do see and some of the Pharisees said this man is not from God because he keeps not the sabbath but others said but how can a man that is a sinner do such signs and you know one of the Pharisees came to that conclusion earlier here in John's gospel it was

Nicodemus and he flat out made the statement Nicodemus was able to connect the dots at least some of them and he said we know that no one can do the signs he's talking about miracles a Simeon we know that no one can do the signs that you have done unless God is with him so Nicodemus put it together to that extent and he knew there was simply no explanation for what Jesus was able to do other than he must have come from a very very powerful source and Nicodemus was and by the way it was Nicodemus who was one of the two along with Joseph of Arimathea who went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus and they took it down from the cross and took him to that tomb so and you know what you stop and think about it guys these were two highly positioned individuals

Joseph Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus and they were putting their reputation on the line by even showing this kindness to those before those fellow Pharisees because this was a public thing and they were identifying with Jesus by simply the kindness that they were performing for his body and I'm sure that they did not gain the approval of their fellow Pharisees so others said how can a man that is a sinner do such signs there was a division among them that is not that is not unusual for the Jewish people as we've often said and as the Jews have said of themselves anytime you get just three Jews together to discuss anything you're going to get four opinions and that's that's always the way it's been with with the

Jew they've got a reputation for that so they come to the blind man again and they say all right now tell us again what sayest thou in that he opened your eyes and he says he's a prophet now this poor blind man former blind man is trying himself to connect the dots he's trying to get a fix on exactly who this Jesus is and he says he's a prophet he's got to be a prophet that's the least he can be he's got to be a prophet and the Jews therefore did not believe concerning him that he had been blind and had received his sight so they're numbering among themselves and they're whispering among themselves and they take this man aside and they're talking among themselves and they say what do you think and somebody says you know I don't think he was actually even born blind I think the whole thing is a hoax it's a put up job blah blah blah and he wasn't born blind at all and others are agreeing and they're saying that's probably true we just can't figure out why this guy's lying about this and someone said hey let's go to his if he was born blind his parents will know that for sure let's let's go to them so they called the parents of him that had received his sight and they asked them saying is this your son who you say was born blind how then does he now see his parents now if you knew anything about the

Jewish culture at that time and the the iron fisted grip that religion and the Pharisees and the scribes and the Sadducees had on the general public you can understand that these parents were intimidated by the Pharisees even coming to them and demanding answers and they are not at all comfortable and the best they can do is they say they say we know first of all let's look at the facts we know that this is our son I guess we ought to know our own son and we know this is our son and fact number two that he was born blind there is no question about that we knew that from the very get go that this boy of ours was born blind what we don't know is who opened his eyes we don't know well they did know but they were going to volunteer the information and the reason that they weren't is revealed later on and we'll see that momentarily we know not ask him he is of age he's not a child he's a grown man we don't know how old he was but he was a grown man even if he were an older teenager he would qualify but we don't know maybe the guy was in his 40s we don't know but he he is of age he shall speak for himself and these things said his parents because they feared the Jews well now wait a minute why should they fear the Jews weren't they Jews also of course they were of course they were it's almost like saying when the FBI came knocking on somebody's door at 2 o'clock in the morning they went to the door as

[35 : 58] Americans they feared the authorities they feared the FBI well why should they fear the FBI because they're Americans and they're Americans that's got nothing to do with it it's why they're there it's the authority issue and everything that goes along with it and you stand to be at great risk

for losing something and these people knew full well that the word had already gotten out in the whole area that if anybody if anybody claims or puts forth the idea that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah we're going to kick him out of the synagogue he's persona non grata we will have a guard at the door and if somebody comes in and believes that Jesus is the Messiah he will not be given entrance so today we would say well big deal who cares but if you were a Jew living in that culture and by the way this is

Jews mistreating Jews and you got to remember that persecution for the cause of Christ extended from the time of the resurrection well into well it went on into the actually into the second century but the earlier persecution for years and years and years was Jews persecuting Jews Paul was one of the leaders yeah and no one was more Jewish than Saul of Tarsus and he headed that up so this idea of persecution of the Jews began with Jews persecuting fellow Jews and it all had to do with issues of spirituality and religion so they had already decided and the parents knew that and if you were put out of the synagogue the first thing that did was it cut you off socially because it was a place of great fellowship and discourse and relationships and it would eliminate your children going to the synagogue for school because that's where the education that's where the education of children was carried on at the synagogue and that would disfellowship you from the standpoint of weddings you wouldn't be able to have any weddings there in connection with the synagogue you wouldn't be able to have any funerals in connection with the synagogue you would be persona non grata you would be a pariah an outsider not recognized or allowed in the synagogue at all not only that but it might even affect your business because these people had business connections and they networked with others who were the stone mason would contract with the carpenter and they would do all kinds of business just like they do today no different and if you are cut off from the synagogue man that's socially politically business wise you were done you were finished you just it would be very hard for you to survive because everything was connected to the synagogue everything

Jewish and it's very very important yes that's just like the shunning with the Amish if you shun nobody will talk to you you're right you're right and that's actually this shunning comes from the scriptures and it has a legitimate aspect to it that Paul addresses in the Corinthian epistles when this guy was carrying on with his with his stepmother and Paul called him out for that and he did so because they were refusing to to disfellowship this man they and Paul says you should have put him out of the congregation and and the end result the end goal is for restitution and for the thing to be solved so that the man will repent and come back and repent of his sin and when he does then you have the responsibility of welcoming him with open arms because he has repented but they didn't even give it that far so the principle is the same and it goes all the way back even actually to the

Old Testament so we are in let's see verse 23 therefore said his parents he's of age ask him they called the second time the man that was born blind said unto him give glory to God we know that this man this Jesus is a sinner he therefore answered whether he be a sinner I know not one thing I know that whereas I was blind now I see I'd love to have seen that guy deliver that line that is that is priceless he's saying you you fellows you'll have to decide among yourselves I don't know anything about this sinner business whether Jesus is a sinner or not but actually I'll tell you what I do know I do know I was blind and I'm not blind anymore I see wow what a put down this is a classic classic case involving our Lord meeting the needs of people and the criticism that he reached was received for doing it it's a beautiful thing and we cannot leave it here but we must because I cannot compete with the food so we will put this miracle on hold until next week and rest in the fact that the man is in glory now and he's got 20-20 vision and won't quit

Joe go back to verse four go back to verse four verse four okay what Jesus speaking in the latter part of verse four he says night is coming when no one can work now what is Jesus referring to there when no one can work what's he talking about well that's that's a good question and it deserves a good answer but I can't give you a good answer in such a short period of time because the food will get cold and we'll put it on okay your assignment for next week okay all of you I want you to research that what does Jesus mean when he said the time is coming but no one can work and next week we'll pull our ignorance and we'll all see what we come up with it should be an interesting thing okay the Lord bless