

**Osceola Sermon / (Blue Grass Festival) (Mark 8:22-25; 10:46-52)**  
Jesus encounters & Heals Two Blind Men. **Aug. 22 (Pastor Bob Vale)**

**Biblical Focus: Mark 8:22** “They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him.”

**Scripture Lesson: Mark 8:22-25 & 10:46-52** <sup>22</sup>They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. <sup>23</sup> He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?"

<sup>MK 8:24</sup> He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around." <sup>MK 8:25</sup> Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

**MK 10:46** Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. <sup>47</sup> When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

<sup>MK 10:48</sup> Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" <sup>MK 10:49</sup> Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." <sup>50</sup> Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. <sup>MK 10:51</sup> "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." <sup>MK 10:52</sup> "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road."

**Opening Hymn: # 572 Pass It On**

**Prayer Chorus: #204 Emmanuel, Emmanuel.**

**Hymn of Discipleship: Amazing Grace (One Verse)**

**Have you ever been in a very dark place unable to see the hand in front of your face?**

**There have been two such places for me.**

1. **Inside Mammoth Cave in Kentucky.** (They turned out the lights and you could actually not see the hand in front of your face. White spots appeared, which is your eyes trying desperately to see something.)
2. **Desert Storm / Gulf War I:** In the middle of the night it was so dark. There was no moon above, and the cloud cover did not allow the stars to be seen. In the middle of the desert it is so very easy to get lost at night. There are no trees, no large rocks or buildings to establish a marking.

When you cannot see, you walk very slow. One time in the dead of night we were in the middle of the desert and the alarm went off that there was a missile coming in our direction. We were told to run back to our bunkers, but not use any light to get there. I ran quickly and stepped right into a four foot deep fox hole. It knocked the wind out of me and was a real wakeup call from me.

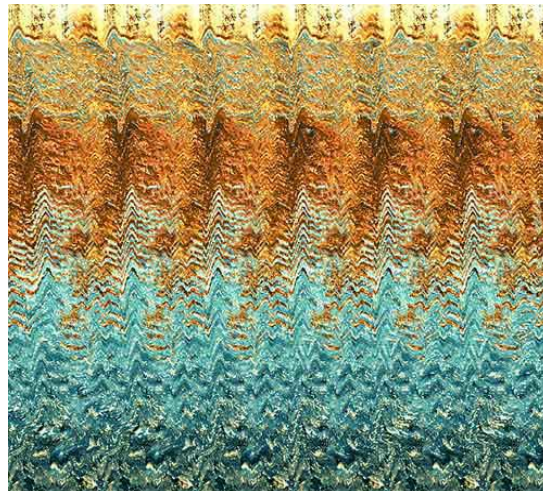
No being able to see physically is a huge handicap.

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**Do you remember about ten or fifteen years back, there was an art form of posters that came out with odd designs? In fact, the posters looked like a bunch of wavy colored lines.**

**However, if you looked at these posters in a different cross eyed fashion, suddenly like magic a beautiful three dimensional picture appeared inside the picture.**

**This form of artwork is called, "Magic Eye Pattern Art." Also called, "Hidden Image Stereogram's."**



It was amazing; how something right before our very eyes cannot not be seen normally; but requires a different type of sight process.

That sounds a lot like looking at God with spiritual eyes rather than physical eyes. There is a huge difference. In fact, before we are Christians we are essentially blind to spiritual matters. **Sometimes even as Christians we fail to see God right before us.**

Today I want to talk to you about two groups of people in the Bible. One group was physically blind and another group of individuals could see very well. Not one of them had eye glasses, and could see normally, but were also unable to see the obvious right in front of them.

The first group in our scripture today are two blind men.

The second group, are the twelve disciples of Jesus.

Let's begin with the two men who were actually blind.

**Turn in your Bibles to: Mark 8:22-25 & Mark 10:46-52** <sup>22</sup>They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and **begged Jesus to touch him.** <sup>23</sup> He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?" <sup>24</sup> He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around." <sup>25</sup> Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

Here Jesus simply spits on the man's eyes to heal him. One could easily ask; why did he have to spit on his eyes? Surely with all the other miracles Jesus performed, he could have just pointed to the man and said your eyes are healed.

This miracle is the only one Jesus ever performed in two stages, the only miracle which involved a process instead of immediate healing. Mark is the only one who records this miracle for us, and for that reason it is rather obscure.

### **Why the Spit?"**

Three times in the Bible, Jesus uses spit to heal people.

**In Mark 7:32-35, a deaf man** with a speech impediment was brought to Jesus. Jesus put His finger in the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue, then looked up to Heaven and groaned, and said to him,

"Ephatha!" (that is, "Be opened!") And immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly.

**In Mark 8:22-25, in Bethsaida, a blind man** was brought to Jesus. Jesus took the blind man outside the village. Putting spittle on his eyes, He laid hands on him and asked, "Do you see anything?" Looking up the man replied, "I see people looking like trees and walking." Then Jesus laid hands on his eyes a second time and the man saw clearly, his sight was restored and he could see everything distinctly.

**In John 9:1-7, Jesus meets up with a blind man** who was blind from birth. Jesus spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on the man's eyes, and said to him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" (which means sent). So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

Did you ever wonder why, in all three healings, Jesus spit? Why did He not just heal these three people with a word or phrase, as He did all the others, without spittle?

### **What I would give for a bottle of Jesus spit today!**

This is certainly one of the healing techniques of Jesus that is not intended for replication today. Saliva, spit, is not a commonly accepted healing substance. In fact, it is far more likely **to pass on disease** than to heal disease. But Jesus had miraculous powers, and he used this technique as a way of demonstrating to the man that his faith had made him well.

It is difficult to know exactly why Jesus used spit. Many of the Bible commentators have wrestled with this problem. William Barclay suggests that this was done as an accommodation of the people's belief that there is something therapeutic about human saliva. People do immediately put to their mouth a finger that is cut or burned to soothe it. That may well be where this belief arose, and there may be some weight to the suggestion. But it does not explain fully what our Lord was doing.

### **Why was this miracle done in two stages?**

**Had Jesus lost some of his divine powers? NO**

The blind man reported that he could see, but only vaguely. He said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking." Some sight was a radical improvement from no sight, but still not particularly useful. His distorted sight would not enable him to function well in society. So Jesus gave the man a second touch. After the second touch, the man reported that he saw everything clearly.

I believe this two-part healing story can be seen as a useful metaphor for our spiritual lives. A lot of people receive the first touch from God. The change is a dramatic improvement, but still they do not see clearly. They have not been fully redeemed. They are still in need of a second touch from the hand of Jesus to enable them to see all things clearly. **(The difference between justified grace and sanctified grace.)**

Someone once said, "The first touch gives sight; the second touch gives clarity. The first touch gives life; the second touch gives meaning to that life. The first touch gives hearing the second gives understanding." (Jerry Hayner, *Minister's Manual* 1979, p. 229-230.)

**Jesus may have been teaching and pointing out to his own disciples the blindness of their own spiritual understanding of things.**

Let's move on to the second miracle healing of a blind man found in **Mark 10:46** "Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, **Bartimaeus** (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging.<sup>47</sup> When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "**Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!**"<sup>MK 10:48</sup> Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "**Son of David, have mercy on me!**"<sup>MK 10:49</sup> Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you."<sup>50</sup> Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.<sup>MK 10:51</sup> "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

MK 10:52 "Go," said Jesus, "**your faith has healed you.**" Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road."

Here we have blind Bartimaeus, who shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Even though he was blind, he saw the man who had the ability to heal him. Jesus even told him, your faith has healed you and immediately Bartimaeus was healed.

Here is what I find fascinating about these two passages and encounters with Jesus.

1. Both men were blind and could not see Jesus physically, but they sure could **see Jesus spiritually** and knew exactly who he was and what type of power he had.
2. So we have two bookend miracles of two blind men being healed.
  - a. One in Mark chapter eight.
  - b. The second in Mark chapter ten.
3. What are the disciples doing in between these two healings? Are they able to see Jesus for who he really is? Not exactly.

**a. Peter: Directly after the first miracle Peter gets in trouble with Jesus.** <sup>MK 8:31</sup> He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>MK 8:33</sup> But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "**Get behind me, Satan!**" he said. "**You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.**"

**b. Pushing the children away from Jesus. Mark 10:13-16** "People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. <sup>15</sup> I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." <sup>16</sup> And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."

**C. Who is the Greatest and who will sit on the right and left side of Jesus when he comes into power? (Mark 9:33 & Mark 10:37)** Jesus has been telling them that he is going to die soon and become a martyr. Yet, they were arguing over who would be the greatest and sit at the right or left hand of Jesus.

They were looking for earthly power and not at spiritual eternal things.

Between these two chapters; The disciples were stumbling over themselves and even pushing people away from Jesus. They were blind to who Jesus really was and the mission he had on this earth.

**Yet two blind men saw it.**

**How about you?**

1. Do you see things in your life with spiritual eyes?
2. Are you so very focused on your Material Possessions & fast paced lifestyle that you have little time for God, yet alone be able to see the Lord working around you?
3. Is God standing right in front of you shouting:
  - a. I want you to talk to your neighbor about me.
  - b. I want you to give more of your life to the work of the church; to use your gifts and talents.

- c. I want you to share more of your possessions with the ministry of the church through tithes and offerings.
- d. I want you to know me better!

**Have you become “Blind” to such spiritual things in your life?**

We have become blind by the self centeredness of our own busy lives. In the end, we leave out God.

**Are you gaining the whole world....yet losing your very soul?**

In his book, [An Anthropologist on Mars](#), neurologist Oliver Sacks tells about Virgil, a man who had been blind from early childhood. When he was 50, Virgil underwent surgery and was given the gift of sight. But as he and Dr. Sacks found out, having the physical capacity for sight is not the same as seeing.

Virgil's first experiences with sight were confusing. He was able to make out colors and movements, but arranging them into a coherent picture was more difficult. Over time he learned to identify various objects, but his habits--his behaviors--were still those of a blind man.

Dr. Sacks asserts, "One must die as a blind person to be born again as a seeing person. It is the interim, the limbo . . . that is so terrible."

To truly see Jesus and his truth means more than observing what he did or said, it means a change of identity.

**Perhaps we need to die to our material self, before our spiritual eyes can be opened?**

**What would it be like to give your life totally over to Christ in every area and see things through spiritual eyes? I tell you it is wonderful. It is like living in two worlds. A physical world; and a spiritual world.** For 51 years Bob Edens was blind. He couldn't see a thing. His world was a black hall of sounds and smells. He felt his way through five decades of darkness. And then, he could see. A skilled surgeon performed a complicated operation and, for the first time, Bob Edens had sight. He found it overwhelming. "I never would have dreamed that yellow is so...yellow," he exclaimed. "I don't have the words. I am amazed by yellow. But red is my favorite color. I just can't believe red. I can see the shape of the moon--and I like nothing better than seeing a jet plane flying across the sky leaving a vapor trail. And of course, sunrises and sunsets. And at night I look at the stars in the sky and the flashing light. You could never know how wonderful everything is."

**\*That is what it is like to see with spiritual eyes!      Let's Pray,**