

The Blind Man's Healing and Our Salvation by Grace

(John 9)

INTRODUCTION:

1. As I read through the Scriptures I sometimes come across events that help me understand, or I feel will help me explain, more about our salvation by grace.
 - A. One such event that I came across recently was the healing of the blind man in John 9.
 - B. This healing intrigued me because of how it was, without question, the result of God's *grace*, but also because of the *process* involved.
 - C. For, that process by which he received grace to be healed sheds some real light on how we are healed of the sin in our lives by God's grace.
2. So, what I want to do today is to consider the blind man's healing and our salvation. To do that I want us to consider the application of God's wonderful grace by:
 - A. Looking at the details of the blind man's healing by examining his condition, the question that surrounded his condition, and the healing Jesus provided.
 - B. Looking at the details of our healing from sin by examining our condition, the question surrounding our condition, and the healing Jesus provides for us.
 - C. For, the comparison of these two events will help us better understand God's grace and how He applies it to our lives.

BODY:

I. The healing of the blind man (John 9).

- A. His condition and the question that was asked concerning it:
 1. The man's condition:
 - a. He was born blind (9:1 – "As He [Jesus] passed by, He saw a man **blind from birth**.").
 - b. He had never known the fullness of life experienced by those who can see.
 - c. Reduced him to begging (9:8 – "Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a **beggar**, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to **sit and beg**?").
 - d. If left to himself, he would die a blind beggar.
 2. The question:
 - a. John 9:2 – "And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, **who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind**?")?
 - i. People suffer because of their sinful actions (1 Pet. 2:20 – "For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience?...").
 - 1) People suffer because of other people's sin, such as that caused by murderers, etc.
 - 2) Unborn babies can suffer when parents sin by using illegal drugs and alcohol or by committing immorality or violence.
 - ii. But they were completely wrong about his blindness resulting from his own sin committed before birth. For, Jesus taught that babies are innocent (Mt. 18:3; 19:14).
 - b. Jesus' response (9:3 – "Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but **it was so that** the works of God might be displayed in him." – NASB).
 - i. First, Jesus denies that disease and affliction are always a direct result of personal or family transgression. Yet, sin has broken our world and causes suffering.
 - ii. Second, Jesus states that this man's affliction was *instead* an opportunity for the *works of God* to be *seen*. (**The following points – "1, 2. a. b." - are optional. One can move to "3" if desired**)
 - 1) I do not think the text says that God *caused* this man to be born blind so His glory would be shown through his affliction, though many translations unfortunately present it this way (NASB, NIV, HCSB).
 - 2) Instead, this should be translated as does the ESV which says, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."
 - a) Such a translation best fits the Greek and does not necessarily imply that God caused this man to be born blind so Jesus could heal him and glorify God.

- b) It best fits Jesus' words that follow (9:4-5 – “We **must** work the works of Him who sent Me **as long as it is day**; night is coming **when no one can work**.⁵ **While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.**”).
 - a. Why did Jesus say this right here?
 - b. I believe it is because Jesus' point was that this man's blindness offered an **opportunity** to do God's works that Jesus **could not pass up**, not that God made him to be born blind.
- 3) Jesus made this same point about Lazarus' death (Jn. 11:4 – “But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, **but for the glory of God**, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”). God did not make Lazarus sick or kill him, but his death offered an *opportunity* to glorify God.

B. The healing:

1. Was a “work of God” (9:3 – “Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the **works of God** might be displayed in him.”).
 - a. And **Jesus** did that **work** (9:30 – “The man answered and said to them, “Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet **He opened my eyes**.”).
 - b. That may seem obvious, but the point we need to get from this is that no matter what was involved in the healing process that followed, it was **God/Jesus that did the healing**.
2. Was by God's *grace* expressed in Jesus:
 - a. For, that Jesus was upon this earth was an expression of God's grace as the Messiah spoken of by Isaiah (Isa. 42:6-7 – “I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, and I will appoint You as a **covenant** to the people, **as a light** to the nations,⁷ to **open blind eyes**, to **bring out prisoners from the dungeon** and those **who dwell in darkness from the prison**.”).
 - b. Now, compare that to Jesus' word (Jn. 9:4-5 – “We **must work the works of Him who sent Me** as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.⁵ **While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world**.”).
 - c. So, Jesus had to do this work so that the world would see the light of God he was shining as the Messiah, the one who brings God's grace into the world.
3. Required Jesus making clay and applying it to the man's eyes (9:6 – “When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and **applied the clay to his eyes**”).
4. Required commands of Jesus be obeyed (9:7 – “and said to him, “**Go, wash in the pool of Siloam**” (which is translated, Sent).”).
 - a. God's grace and power to heal this man through Jesus included both the application of the mud and the command to be followed.
 - b. The blind man accepting either one without the other would not result in his healing.
5. Did not take place until the blind man **obeyed** (9:7b – “**So he went away and washed, and came back seeing**.”).
 - a. Though he could have claimed faith in Jesus' power to heal, as many do today, His faith did not bring healing until it caused him to obey—to go and wash.
 - b. This is confirmed by the man's statement to the Pharisees (9:15 – “Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, “**He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see**.”)
6. So, let's review how this man was healed by God power and grace (comparison slide)

II. Our spiritual healing

A. Our condition and the question:

1. Our condition: We are *spiritual* beggars devoid of real life (Eph. 2:1-3, 12 – “And you were **dead in your trespasses and sins**,² in which **you formerly walked** [lived] according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature **children of wrath**, even as the rest...¹² remember that you were at that time **separate from Christ**,

excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, **having no hope and without God** in the world.”).

- a. As sinners we walk about in spiritual death, as slaves to fleshly desires, being without hope, without God, and having only His wrath to look forward to. **We have nothing!**
 - b. And, like the blind man, if left to ourselves, we will die in that condition. For, we alone cannot take away sin’s condemnation! We need God’s power and grace to do that.
2. Question: Our condition is caused by our sin!
- a. For, all have sinned (Rom. 3:9-12 – “What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both **Jews and Greeks are all under sin**; ¹⁰ as it is written, “There is none righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; ¹² **all have turned aside**, together they have **become useless**; there is none who does good, there is not even one.”).
 - b. Through our sin spiritual death has come to us all (Rom. 4:12 – “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men, because all sinned**.”).
3. So, our only hope against death is the gift of God’s **grace** (Roman 6:23 – “For the **wages of sin is death**, but the **free gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.”).
- B. Our healing process:
1. The **work of God** (Rom. 5:6-8 – “For while we were still **helpless**, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly**. ⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. ⁸ But **God demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that while we were yet **sinners, Christ died for us**.”).
 - a. Note how we are *helpless*, unable to affect our own healing, or salvation.
 - b. So, our healing, no matter what is involved, is by God’s work of grace.
 - c. For, our salvation comes through God’s love shown in Jesus dying for us on the cross. 2. Requires Jesus applying his **blood** to our lives (Rom. 5:9-10 – “Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be **saved from the wrath of God through Him**. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God **through the death of His Son**, much more, having been **reconciled**, we shall be saved by His life.”).
 - a. We hear these words in these verses so much that it is so easy to take them for granted.
 - b. But from this verse alone we should see how terrible our sinful condition truly is and how great God’s love and the grace it produced truly are! 3. Requires obeying Jesus’ commands given to the apostles.
 - a. Matt. 28:18-20 – “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you**; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
 - b. Mark 16:15-16 – “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and **preach the gospel** to all creation. ¹⁶ He who has **believed** and **has been baptized** shall be **saved**; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” 4. We are not healed of our sin until we obey Christ’s commands to be washed in the water of baptism.
 - a. This is what was commanded by the apostles at Pentecost:
 - i. The command (Acts 2:36-38 – “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.” ³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, **what shall we do?**” ³⁸ Peter said to them, “**Repent**, and each of you **be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins**; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”).
 - ii. Those who received their words *obeyed* and were baptized resulting in their souls being added to the number of the saved (Acts 2:40-41, 47 – “And with many other

words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “**Be saved** from this perverse generation!”⁴¹ So then, **those who had received his word were baptized**; and that day there were **added about three thousand souls....**⁴⁷ ... **And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.**”).

- b. We see this same command from Ananias concerning Saul’s salvation (Acts 22:14-16 – “And he said, ‘The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ Now why do you delay? **Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins**, calling on His name.””).

C. Baptism and faith

- 1. Baptism is rejected by many as being “salvation by works” in contradiction to grace and faith.
- 2. But I would remind them:
 - a. That the blind man was healed by the *work of God’s grace* only *after* expressing his *faith* in obedience, or washing in the Pool of Siloam (Jn. 9:7).
 - b. We are healed of our sin by the *work of God’s grace* only *after* expressing our *faith* in obedience/baptism (Col. 2:10-13 – “and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; ¹¹ and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; ¹² having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions”).
 - i. Our being **made complete** comes **in Him**, in Jesus, or by God’s grace (2:10).
 - ii. In addition, it is **in and through Christ** that God provides the **spiritual circumcision** of the body of the flesh, the vehicle by which we become condemned in sin (2:11).
 - iii. But here is the thing, that **circumcision**, or removal, of sin from our lives **happens in connection with baptism** (3:12).
 - 1) For, in baptism we are **buried with Christ**, which indicates we have **died** to our previous life of sin and its condemnation.
 - 2) And, in baptism we are **raised with Christ through faith in the working of God**.
 - iv. From this we learn that being baptized:
 - 1) Is not about our “works” or our earning salvation.
 - 2) Is about our faith, about trusting in the working of God to remove our sin and raise us up anew with Christ.
 - 3) So, if you refuse to be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins and be saved, you are refusing to show faith in the working of God to save you by removing your sin and raising you up with Christ.
- 3. So, let’s review how this man was healed by God power and grace (comparison slide)

CONCLUSION:

- 1. I hope you can see that like the blind man, we are healed by God’s grace through *Jesus* doing the *works of God* when we *trust* him enough to obey His command to be baptized, which allows his blood to be applied to our lives to forgive us and save us from our sins!
- 2. So, have you shown that you have faith enough in Jesus as your Lord and Savior to repent of your sins, confess your faith in Him, and to express that faith by being baptized in His name for the forgiveness of your sins? If not, you have not been healed of your sins. It is just that simple.
- 3. But God in His grace calls you now to be saved? So, will you receive His word and come right now?