

“The Miracle Behind the Miracles”—John 9:35-39

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “The Miracle Behind the Miracles”, is John 9:35-39 → *Jesus heard that they had cast out of the synagogue the man who had formerly been blind, and having found him He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And Who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen Him, and it is He Who is speaking to you.” He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped Him. Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

When considering the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ one can easily notice the revelation of Himself as true God in the miracles He performed: Raising people from the dead; casing demons out of people; restoring health to the deaf, mute, lepers, lame and the blind (such as the man in our text). Aside from providing comfort and relief of suffering for many people, Jesus’ miracles revealed Him as the Savior promised in the Old Testament. (cf. Matthew 11:4-5) Even His miracle of changing water into wine (which may seem kind of strange or insignificant to many) served the purpose of manifesting *His glory* so *His disciples*

would believe *in Him*. (cf. John 2:11)

However, have you ever thought about “the rest of the story” in the lives of the people who were affected by Jesus’ miracles? I’m not simply referring to the fact that those Jesus rose from the dead eventually had to go through the process of dying **again**. Neither am I referring to the fact that those who experienced physical restoration in one area of their life still had physical challenges in other areas. I am thinking about the miracle behind the miracles which Jesus performed.

The healing of a man who had been blind from birth caused an awful lot of concern for many people who began wondering about this “Jesus” character. Looking over John chapter 9 we can see this concern expressed by many of the people. His *neighbors* and acquaintances inquired about his new ability to see. His explanation to them recorded in John 9:11 was that *the man called Jesus made mud and anointed his eyes and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam. “So I went and washed and received my sight,”* he told them.

Apparently they needed to figure out Who this *man called Jesus* was so they took him to the Pharisees. The Pharisees were considered the experts of God’s written law in the Old Testament of God’s working in their lives. The focus of their concern in this situation was different according to John 9:16 → *Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath.”* Instead of being

impressed because a miracle had been performed as a blessing to this man, they were more concerned about the day upon which it was done! How could this man be *from God* if He breaks the Sabbath law by working (i.e. healing) and instructing someone else to work (i.e. wash the mud out of his eyes) on Yahweh's designated day of rest? As they wondered about Jesus' Person & Work, it caused *a division among them*.

When asked what he thought about this Jesus *the man who had formerly been blind* responded: *He is a prophet* (cf. John 9:17). Naturally it caused grave concern that a man giving instructions to break God's commands was considered a prophet of God by the "parishioners!" After questioning his parents to make sure he truly was blind from birth they questioned him again. His response? He challenged them concluding: *If this man were not from God, He could do nothing*. (cf. John 9:33). This Jesus character was causing people to question the authority of the religious leaders and experts of God's Law? The Pharisees were so angry about this predicament that they threw him out of the synagogue. This was actually an action of excommunication stating that he was outside the realm of God's grace and forgiveness.

We see the miracle behind the miracle unfolding in the life of this man who had formerly been blind. There was something far greater than making a blind man see going on here as more people began to really

“see” something! When the LORD performs miracles in the lives of people He does it to serve **His primary work of creating faith in Him.**

Jesus stated the purpose of His Person & Work in verse 39 of our text: *For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.* He was referring to what those inquiring minds needed to see as well as what you need to see today—your sin and your need for His forgiveness. Sinners live in denial of their sin all the time. Sure, you may admit you’ve done the deed which goes against God’s will just like our first parents in the Garden of Eden admitted. (cf. Genesis 3:12-13) However, will you admit and accept responsibility for your sin? They didn’t. They thought they saw clearly and ended up spiritually blind and separated from God for eternity.

Jesus came to reveal your sin and the devil’s deceiving you into thinking that you can see clearly while living in spiritual darkness. Whether it’s the contempt you hold for that person who hurt you or the self-righteousness to which you cling for security in your life, Jesus breaks through the darkness of your sin so that you *may see* your need for His forgiveness of sins, see His perfect sacrifice on the cross for the punishment of your sins, and repent. This is the miracle of faith which the Holy Spirit produced in the man who had formerly been blind. Look at the confession he made when Jesus asked him if he believed *in the Son of Man. He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped Him.* (cf. verse

The Holy Spirit was working through this revelation in the hearts of those Pharisees as well. According to John 9:40 *some of the Pharisees near Him heard these things, and said to Him, "Are we also blind?"* The Holy Spirit convicted them as ones who thought they saw God's will for their lives clearly while rejecting His Christ standing right in front of them. The Holy Spirit was working to perform the miracle of faith and repentance in their lives too!

Think about it: The text reveals to us the miracle behind the miracle in the life of this man who had been born blind. I wonder how many of these Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking experienced the miracle of faith before they finished out their lifetime? We know that while Jesus' own step-brothers did not believe in Him during His earthly ministry some of them later came to faith in Jesus as the Christ, their Savior. (cf. Acts 1:14; 1 Corinthians 15:7) As the Holy Spirit continued to work through the Law and the Gospel shared by the Christians following the Day of Pentecost, Acts 6:7 says: *The word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and **a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.*** I wonder how many of these priests were numbered amongst those who had Jesus killed and later confessed Him as their Lord and Savior! The Holy Spirit brings the miracle of faith behind the miracles of Jesus!

This situation extended beyond a miracle of making a blind man see. It opened the door so that **many people** would become curious and in their search the Holy Spirit would work through the written and proclaimed Word of God to bring them to repentance and faith in Jesus! This is why Hebrews 4:12 describes the Word of God as *living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit . . . discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* The Holy Spirit continues to work the miracle of faith amidst the miracles of God daily.

It seems that many times we can get so caught up in trying to understand what's happening in our situations, or why they're happening and unfolding as they are, and fail to search out the LORD for help and guidance to meet the challenges before us. Through God's means of grace—the Gospel, Baptism, Absolution and the Lord's Supper—the Holy Spirit produces the miracle faith in you and sustains that miracle as you seek the LORD daily. His purpose is to enlighten your heart—not just to enlighten your mind—so that your relationship with Jesus will be characterized by a stronger devotion and commitment to Him. Amen.

Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name;

make known His deeds among the peoples!

Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; tell of all His wondrous works!

Glory in His holy name;

let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His presence continually!

Remember the wondrous works that He has done,

His miracles, and the judgments He uttered.

(Psalm 105:1-5)

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