

## Touched by Jesus- Blind Man

Since Christmas, we have examined the lives of people who met and were transformed, one way or the other, by a personal encounter with Jesus. Truth is, anyone and everyone, then and now, who has an encounter with Jesus has been or will be changed. If anyone comes open to the truth and what Christ wants to do for them, they will be powerfully and miraculously transformed from the inside out. This transformation begins immediately upon repentance and confession of Christ as Savior and Lord and continues throughout this life and on to eternity.

Have you met Jesus? What has changed? How are you different? How does it effect your relationships? How do your spouse, children, friends, coworkers, and enemies observe this transformation on a daily basis?

Today we're going to examine the encounter a man born blind had with Jesus. Let's consider particularly how his life was changed by the encounter he had with Jesus. Here is his story.....

**1** As He was passing by, He saw a man blind from birth. **2** His disciples questioned Him: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" **3** "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," Jesus answered. "[This came about] so that God's works might be displayed in him. **4** We must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." **6** After He said these things He spit on the ground, made some mud from the saliva, and spread the mud on his eyes. **7** "Go," He told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means "Sent"). So he left, washed, and came back seeing. **8** His neighbors and those who formerly had seen him as a beggar said, "Isn't this the man who sat begging?" **9** Some said, "He's the one." "No," others were saying, "but he looks like him." He kept saying, "I'm the one!" **10** Therefore they asked him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" **11** He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So when I went and washed I received my sight." **12** "Where is He?" they asked. "I don't know," he said. John 9:1-12 (HCSB)

Who sinned this man or his parents was a reasonable question. **The physical, emotional and spiritual consequences of sin can impact our lives for the rest of our time on earth**, and outside of the atoning death of Christ, for all eternity! If I asked for a show of hands this morning, and we were all honest, those of us who have scars in our lives from the impact of our own sin and the sin of others, you could turn and observe a sea of hands, some with outward physical scars and many more with scars buried deep into our minds and hearts. Sin is devastating. Sin eats us up on the inside and on the outside. **God hates sin!** He loves sinners, but He hates sin.

But, there was incorrect thinking among Jesus disciples--- if and when anyone has a problem or sickness that it is always a consequence of their or someone else's sin. It certainly can be but...

Sometimes things just happen. God created the world and set nature on its course. Not every sickness or disaster is necessarily the judgment of God. It can be, but it is not always the case. If you go around the church enough today and every time we meet hugging on everyone you meet, if one of those people has a cold, you probably will come down with a cold yourself. That's certainly not God's judgment. In fact, He told us in four different books of New Testament books.

**16** Greet one another with a holy kiss. Romans 16:16 (HCSB)

But hugs and kisses spread germs and germs carry colds and flues. Now I'm not advocating stopping being affectionate to one another. I think the benefit far exceeds the risk.

But on that particular day, it was neither the judgment of God nor a natural occurrence. Jesus said, “[This came about] so that God's works might be displayed in him.” God had a plan that exceeded the vision, experience and understanding of even Jesus' well intentioned and curious disciples. Probably the most frequently appropriate answer to the reason for our suffering and losses is that God has a plan for His works to be displayed in our lives.

How many other times did Jesus make mud out of spit and use it to heal someone? None. Every life-changing encounter Jesus had with an individual was custom designed for that person's need and transformation.

Notice the reaction of the crowd as the man came back from the pool of Siloam. **Some didn't even recognize him.** When a person has had an encounter with Jesus, they are changed! He even looked different.

**13** They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees. **14** The day that Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes was a Sabbath. **15** So again the Pharisees asked him how he received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” he told them. “I washed and I can see.” **16** Therefore some

of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for He doesn’t keep the Sabbath!” But others were saying, “How can a sinful man perform such signs?” And there was a division among them. **17** Again they asked the blind man, “What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?” “He’s a prophet,” he said. **18** The Jews did not believe this about him—that he was blind and received sight—until they summoned the parents of the one who had received his sight. **19** They asked them, “Is this your son, [the one] you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” **20** “We know this is our son and that he was born blind,” his parents answered. **21** “But we don’t know how he now sees, and we don’t know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he’s of age. He will speak for himself.” **22** His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews, since the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him as Messiah, he would be banned from the synagogue. **23** This is why his parents said, “He’s of age; ask him.” **24** So a second time they summoned the man who had been blind and told him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner!” **25** He answered, “Whether or not He’s a sinner, I don’t know. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see!” **26** Then they asked him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?” **27** “I already told you,” he said, “and you didn’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don’t want to become His disciples too, do you?” **28** They ridiculed him: “You’re that man’s disciple, but we’re Moses’ disciples. **29** We know that God has spoken to Moses. But this man—we don’t know where He’s from!” **30** “This is an amazing thing,” the man told them. “You don’t know where He is from, yet He opened my eyes! **31** We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He listens to him. **32** Throughout history no one has ever heard of someone opening the eyes of a person born blind. **33** If this man were not from God, He wouldn’t be able to do anything.” **34** “You were born entirely in sin,” they replied, “and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out. John 9:13-34 (HCSB)

Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath. The Pharisees used this fact to label Jesus as not being from God and being a sinner. What was going on? What was the big deal about Jesus healing on the Sabbath that made the Pharisees so angry?

According to Jesus own words, “**The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath** Mark 2:27 (HCSB)

Why? Rest and worship. God didn’t get tired after six days of creating. He, knowing the heart of man, established the holy schedule knowing that man would work every day ignoring his family and his God if left to his own.

But man, particularly the Jewish leaders, had taken that simple, need based commandment from God and turned it into a way for the hierarchy to manipulate and control the people. The man-made laws regarding the Sabbath had become so nit-picky and ridiculous that worship and rest were squeezed right out of the picture. The people, by the time Jesus arrived, so had to tip-toe through the Sabbath that it was probably the most stressful day of the week for them. In the beginning the Sabbath laws were reasonable and practical, but that was a thing of the distant past.

Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath. Those who were so concerned with the picky, man-made details of how the Sabbath was to be conducted totally missed out on a phenomenal opportunity to worship, which was and is the principle purpose of the Sabbath. God in the flesh was there, He miraculously restored sight to a grown man who had never seen the light of day, and I guarantee you at least most of the people had church. They worshipped! They praised the Lord! They shouted hallelujah! They were transformed!

But the nit-picking, nay sayers threw the man who was healed right out of the place.

**35** When Jesus heard that they had thrown the man out, He found him and asked, “**Do you believe in the Son of Man?**” **36** “Who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?” he asked. **37** Jesus answered, “**You have seen Him; in fact, He is the One speaking with you.**” **38** “I believe, Lord!” he said, and he worshipped Him. John 9:35-38 (HCSB)

How is it that this man on his second encounter with Jesus said “I believe, Lord!” and worshipped Him while some of the Jewish leaders, particularly many of the scribes and Pharisees, followed Jesus around extensively, seeing the miracles and hearing His teaching, yet completely failed to recognize who Jesus was and believe in Him? Short simple answer- sin. The more extended answer is that they didn’t want to change. They didn’t want to give up their positions of power and influence in the community. They wanted things to stay the way they were. They liked their life and they liked their sin and they didn’t want Jesus messing with it.

You can be **touched by Jesus:**

**Question** A very easy way to become confused and discouraged in your faith, and to say the least, miss out on a life-transforming encounter with Jesus, is to not go to the Lord questioning the purpose of your life situation, suffering and loss.

Did this happen to me because of my sin?

Do I just happen to be in the path of a natural storm?

Does God have a special purpose for me in my suffering?

God may be up to something extraordinary that involves a major transformation of your life and/or those around you and you could miss it because you think God is mad at you or you just have bad “luck.” Ask God.

**Observe the Sabbath** Understanding the spirit of God's laws, I don't think it really matters that the OT Sabbath was on a Saturday and most Christians worship on Sunday. What matters is that, one day a week, all day, we worship, we rest and nothing else.

Don't just come. Look for Jesus. Look for Him to do something extraordinary and miraculous. And by all means, don't get caught up in the nit-picking, nay saying that quenches the Spirit and hinders true worship and life transformation.

**Be creative-** How many other times did Jesus make mud out of spit and used it to heal someone? None. In considering how you might approach someone who needs Jesus, think outside the box, the set plan. Everyone is different. Jesus approached each person differently and so should we. You probably don't need to try the spit and mud in the eyes thing. It's already been done.

**Be willing to change** Many of the Pharisees totally missed Jesus and are spending eternity in Christless hell because they refused to turn loose of their sin, their power, their self-importance, their traditions.....

You can see and even believe all there is to see and believe about Jesus but if you are not willing to change, or better put- be changed by Jesus, you are lost. Repentance is change. Belief in Christ is change, salvation is a major change that begins and will continue throughout this life.

**Question:** Do you want to be changed.