

Spit in the Mud

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

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Scripture: John Chapters 9 and 10

Purpose: When Jesus Christ spit in the mud, He performed a sign which proved who He was. His follow up teaching in chapter ten, reiterated that He was the Door and Good Shepherd that lays down His life for the sheep. This section of scripture also provides us assurance that no one will be able to snatch us out of Christ's hand. It also calls us to commit ourselves to Christ and to recognize He is the only way of salvation.

A man went into Wal Mart one day to buy two large bags of dog food. As he was about to check out, a woman behind him asked if he had a dog. Don't you hate it when people ask you questions when the answer is right there in front of them. My internal voice would have said, "What do you think I have, an elephant?"



Because the man had little else to do, on impulse, he told her that no he didn't have a dog, and that he was starting the Purina Diet again. He went on to say, "I probably shouldn't because I ended up in the hospital last time. On the bright side though, I had lost 50 pounds before I awakened in an intensive care ward with tubes coming out of every hole in my body and IVs in both arms."

He told her that it was essentially a perfect diet. The way that it works is to load your pockets with Purina nuggets and simply eat one or two every time you feel hungry. The food is nutritionally complete so he was going to give it a try again. By this time, everyone else in line with them was enthralled with his story.

Horrified, the lady asked if the man ended up in intensive care because the dog food had poisoned him. He told her no; He stopped in the middle of the parking lot to scratch his fleas and a car hit him.

Another guy behind her was laughing so hard, he was about to have a heart attack. The man reported that Wal Mart won't let him shop there anymore.



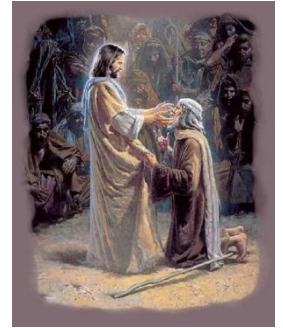
Today's sermon is a synthesis of both chapters nine and ten in the Book of John. These two chapters blend together beautifully to illustrate for us the gracious abundant gift of sightedness that can only be

found in Jesus Christ.

In our passage of scripture, we find Jesus bringing (1) a touch of healing to a blind man. We also learn of (2) the invitation to believe given to the blind man. We also find (3) an assurance of security for those that were once blind. Jesus would have each one of us to identify with the blind man. Our first step is to trust Jesus with the work of salvation, commit our life to Him, and then find our comfort and assurance in Him because He is the keeper of His sheepfold.

I. A Touch for the Blind Man (John 9:1-7)

This story of the healing of the blind man is only told in the book of John. No other gospel tells this story. The passage from John 9:1-7 continues to raise the healings Jesus is performing to a new level. As He was walking, Jesus encounters a man born blind. The man did not ask for the healing, but Jesus SAW Him in his blindness. His disciples asked Jesus an unusual question. They asked Jesus, *“Who sinned to cause this man to be born blind? The man or his parents?”* Jesus replied, *“Neither, this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.”*



During that day and time, when a person was born with a deformity or contracted an illness, it was assumed that the reason for that was because of sin. Either the person had sinned terribly or he was receiving a punishment for the sins of his parents. In the story of Job, you recall that his friends insisted that because of this terrible event that had occurred, surely Job had sinned. But in the midst of every tragedy, there appears a glimmer of purpose.

Jesus was going to heal this man that was born blind. Keep in mind, this man had been born blind. He may have been missing an eyeball. He may have had a detached retina. We don't know exactly what was wrong with this man. But Jesus did something that our culture considers somewhat



crude. He spat upon the ground and made mud with his saliva. Spit is mentioned three times in connection with miracles that Jesus performed. There was a deaf man in Mark chapter seven that says, *“Jesus took the deaf person aside, put His finger into his ears, and he spit and touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven, sighed, and said to him, ‘Be Opened.’ And his ears were opened, and his tongue was loosed.”*

Another example is found in Mark chapter eight. A blind man was brought to Him and asked Jesus to touch him. Jesus took him outside the town. *“And when He spit on his eyes, and put His hands upon him, He asked him if he saw anything. He said he saw men as trees. Jesus touched him again and his eyes were made whole again.”*

The scripture tells us that we are made of dust. When we die, we will return to dust. In Genesis, God fashioned Adam out of the dust of the earth and then breathed life into Adam. There is something creative about what Jesus is doing in John chapter nine. He is taking the material man is made of and in some ways making a replacement part.



After Jesus applies the mud, Jesus instructs the man to go to the pool of Siloam and wash. Would the man have ever seen if he did not wash as commanded? I don't think so. But it is a simple

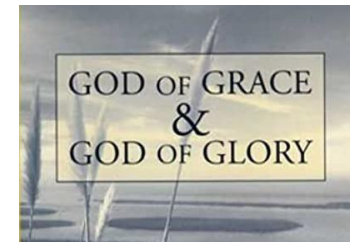
request. None the less, the man had to respond. In the Old Testament, Naaman, a great general in the army was stricken by leprosy. The general came to the prophet, Elisha, for healing. Elisha told the man to go to the Jordan and dip, or wash himself in the water seven times. At first

the man refuses. It seems so simple, it seems childish, and it seems so inappropriate for a man of his position and standing. This general's right-hand man reminded him that if the prophet asked him to do a difficult thing, then he would be willing to do that. This is so simple that even a weak person could do it. (II Kings 5)

The same is true for this man. He was to simply wash. How many of us have made God's instructions so complicated that we refuse to listen or believe? How many of us have refused to accept Christ as a little child simply because it is "beneath us."? How many of us have refused to be baptized, or enter into the waters of identification and purification, because it is "not becoming of a person of my situation or status." How many of us would do the difficult if God said do it for salvation, but balk at the idea of surrender and submission?

This man did as Jesus instructed. And you know what? He was healed! You would think that people would be rejoicing but, you guessed it, the Pharisees did not like the fact that Jesus had healed another person on the Sabbath. Back in chapter five, He healed the man by the pool of Bethesda. If you thought they were upset then, they were REALLY upset now. Jesus healed another person again on a Sabbath.

There is a song in our hymnal, *“God of Grace, and God of Glory”* which was written by Harry Emerson Fosdick. He was a famous liberal pastor at the Riverside Church in New York from 1930 to 1946. Fosdick was most famous for his sermon in 1924 at



the New York Baptist State Convention where he preached the sermon, “Will the Fundamentalist Win?” He was the most liberal preacher of the day. He denied the virgin birth of Christ as well as the miracles found in the bible. Yet thousands flocked to hear him preach, including John D. Rockefeller.

I have a hard time understanding why Fosdick simply swept aside the miracles that are so clearly demonstrated in the New Testament, especially here in the Book of John. I believe these events occurred just as they are recorded for us. Jesus, the son of God came to earth to do the will of God.

II. The Inquisition of the Blind Man (John 9:13-39)

The Pharisees just did not understand or believe it occurred either.



The man that was healed from blindness was brought before the Pharisees to testify about what or who had done this to him.

They asked him, how he was made to see again. *“This man, Jesus, put clay on my eyes, and I washed it, and now I can see.”*



These legalists could not grasp that God was in their midst. The only thing they understood was that Jesus had broken (in their opinion) the Sabbath.

One group of people said Jesus was from God because He does these works.

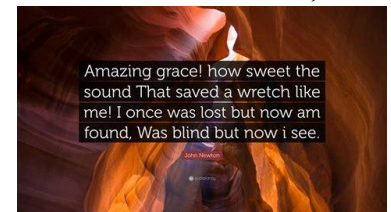
Another group insists since Jesus breaks the Sabbath Law, He can't be from God.

What they failed to understand was Jesus Christ was Lord of the Sabbath!

These Pharisees are not satisfied. They brought his parents before them. *“Is this your son? Was he born blind? How did he become healed? Tell us!”*

The parents were afraid to upset the rulers so they answered, *“Yes, this is our son that was born blind. As for how he became healed, we do not know; ask him yourself, he is of age.”*

Laughing and mocking the Pharisees, the healed man said, *“How many times do I have to tell you. Can't you understand?! I do not know if this man Jesus is a sinner, I only know that I was once blind, but now I see.”*



The first line in Amazing Grace, written by John Newton, says: *“Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.”*

III. An Invitation to the Blind Man (John 9: 35-39)

Jesus uses the physical blindness of this man to illustrate that the Pharisees that seek to condemn Him are themselves spiritually blind. I am confident to say, that it is infinitely better to be physically blind, and spiritually sighted than to be physically sighted and spiritually blind.

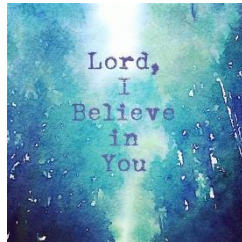


Jesus reunites with the man after he is cast out of the temple by the Pharisees and introduces Himself to the man. Jesus asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He asked Jesus, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

Jesus replied, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”

The man said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshipped Him.

Today, Jesus is asking you the same question, “**Do you believe in the Son of God?**” Can you come to Christ and say, “**Lord, I believe!**”



Jesus announces His purpose once again, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those that see may be made blind.” Jesus is always turning the simple into the complex and turning the complex into the simple. It is by faith and trust that these things can be overcome.

A theologian gave a lecture one day to a class of eager students who wanted to learn all they could from him. At the conclusion of the lecture, there was time for some questions. Someone asked him, what has been the most profound statement or thought concerning Jesus he has learned over his life. He stood there for a moment and then replied. “*Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.*”



IV. An assurance of security for those once blind. (John 10:7-18)

Our story doesn't end there. With every encounter in the book of John, there is a healing followed by a profound teaching.

After Jesus' battle of words with the Pharisees, He turns his attention to those that have decided to follow Jesus. Jesus, the master communicator, illustrates that it is himself that is the keeper of those that follow Him.

Jesus draws upon a scene familiar to his hearers. During that time, a great many people understood the method of shepherds. It was their custom to bring the sheep into a safe coral at the end of an evening. The sheep would be called to their place of rest by the shepherd. He would call his sheep and they would hear his voice and come and enter into the enclosed space.



Sometimes the wolves would try to sneak over the wall and steal a sheep. Those were not of the flock of the shepherd. Sometimes the shepherd would hire another person to keep watch over the flock of sheep. If the person that was hired was not committed to the welfare of the sheep, then when attacks came upon the sheep by organized wolves, then the hired person would run away and the sheep would be scattered.

Jesus reassures those that have believed in Jesus Christ that “He is the door.” He is the only door that secures the sheep. The only way into the fold of the sheep is by way of the door of Jesus Christ. You may try to slip in over the side with good works, with faithful attendance, by many other methods, but only those that know the shepherd will enter into His safety.



A visitor saw the shepherds in Nazareth bringing their flocks to water them at the well. When the sheep had drunk their fill, the shepherds called and their sheep followed them. The visitor asked the shepherds if the sheep always followed their own shepherds when they called them. “Yes,” replied the shepherd, “except under one condition.” “What is that?” asked the visitor. “The sheep that do not follow the voice of the shepherd are the sick sheep. If a sheep is healthy, it will always follow the shepherd, but if there is something wrong with the sheep, it will follow anybody.”²

The Pharisees wanted to know plainly who Jesus was. He told them time and time again. Israel identified very well with the symbolism of a sheep. They understood the role of

the shepherd and the hireling. Jesus was saying that the Pharisees were simply hirelings who ultimately do not care about the sheep.

There is also a modern-day application to this teaching. Many churches have pastors that are not teaching God’s word. They only bring discord and disunity among its members. The result is a split and a scattering of the church members. I have learned that I am NOT the shepherd, but rather one of the sheep myself. I need to look and depend upon Christ more as my good shepherd as I try and point everyone to the Good Shepherd.



The good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, has laid down His life for the sheep. Jesus said that He would lay it down and take it back up. No one would take his life from Him. That is how much He loves us. He willingly died for us.

Verse sixteen of chapter ten says, “*And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice and there will be one flock and one shepherd.*”

This tells us that Jesus knew the promise was given first to the Jews, but later the invitation would come to those outside the Jewish faith – the Gentiles. Jesus knew before the foundation of the world the makeup of the bride of Christ – the Church. The bride is composed of Jews, and Gentiles which comprise all the people groups of the world. It is not ethnic or racial. Jesus is calling everyone to repentance to come unto Him all that believe.

It is His desire that none perish, but come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Jesus has come into the world to save sinners from their sin. He has come to be the shepherd of our lives. He is the door – literally – to God.



Jesus concludes his teaching with this final farewell in verses John 10:25-29. I think it would be appropriate to end the same way today.

“I told you and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are one.”

LET US PRAY

Notes:

¹ Mikey’s Funnies, A Dog Food Funny, May 11, 2026

² Illustrations of Bible Truths, #756, Sick Sheep