

“THE SUMMER OF MIRACLES”

“THE MIRACLE OF TOUCH”

MARK 8:22-26

I’VE COME THIS MORNING TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME GOOD NEWS.

IF YOU THINK THAT NOBODY CARES ABOUT YOU, YOUR NEEDS OR YOUR CONDITION - JESUS IS CONCERNED ABOUT YOU!

HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT YOU – WITH ALL OF YOUR GOOD POINTS AND BAD POINTS, YOUR STRENGTHS AND YOUR WEAKNESSES. YES, CHRIST IS CONCERNED ABOUT YOU!

- 1. HIS CONCERN IS MULTI-LAYERED. HIS CONCERN IS MULTI-FACETED. HOWEVER HIS CONCERN IS NOT AS ONE WHO IS BILLIONS OF MILES AWAY.**
- 2. HIS CONCERN DOES NOT EMANATE FROM SOMEONE WHO SOLELY SITS HIGH AND LOOKS LOW.**
- 3. HIS CONCERN DOES NOT COME FROM SOMEONE WHO IS DISJOINTED, DISINTERESTED AND DISCONNECTED.**

NO, HIS CONCERN IS PERSONAL, PRIVATE AND PRECIOUS. HIS CARE AND CONCERN IS NOT RELAYED TO US BY THE MAIL OR VIA TEXT MESSAGE OR TWITTER OR E-MAIL OR TELEPHONE CALL.

HIS CONCERN IS UP CLOSE AND VERY PERSONAL.

- 1. IT’S SO PERSONAL THAT HE DEALS WITH YOU DIFFERENTLY FROM HOW HE DEALS WITH THE PERSON SITTING NEXT TO YOU.**

2. **IT'S SO PERSONAL THAT HE DEALS WITH YOU DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER PEOPLE IN THE SAME HOUSE.**
3. **IT'S SO PERSONAL THAT HE DEALS WITH US DIFFERENTLY EVEN IN DIFFERENT SEASONS OF OUR LIVES.**

JESUS PROVIDES PERSONAL ATTENTION THAT GOES BEYOND WHATEVER ATTENTION YOU COULD RECEIVE ANY WHERE ELSE:

1. **THERE IS NO DOCTOR LIKE JESUS.**
2. **THERE IS NO LAWYER LIKE JESUS.**
3. **THERE IS NO COMPANY KEEPER LIKE JESUS.**
4. **THERE IS NO FRIEND LIKE JESUS.**
5. **THERE IS NO PARTNER LIKE JESUS.**
6. **THERE IS NO KEEPER LIKE JESUS.**

HIS ULTIMATE ACT OF ATTENTION IS NOT JUST THE WORDS OF CARE AND CONCERN.

NO – IT'S IN HIS ACT OF PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH US – IT'S IN HIS TOUCH!

ALL OF US HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY HIS TOUCH – SPIRITUAL, PHYSICALLY, AND METAPHORICALLY.

WE'VE ALL BEEN TOUCHED BY THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD – EVEN WHEN WE DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS HIM!

IT WAS JESUS WHO:

1. **WOKE US UP THIS MORNING!**
2. **PROVIDED SHELTER OVER OUR HEADS LAST NIGHT!**

3. GAVE US FOOD TO EAT, WATER TO DRINK!

4. PROTECTED US!

THE SONGWRITER SAID, “HE TOUCHED ME, YES, HE TOUCHED ME – AND OH THE JOY THAT FLOODS MY SOUL. SOMETHING HAPPENED AND NOW I KNOW – HE TOUCHED ME AND MADE ME WHOLE.”

HIS TOUCH HAS MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR LIVES.

THE TEXT

OUR TEXT TAKES PLACE IN BETHSAIDA.

IN BIBLE DAYS, THERE WERE TWO BETHSAIDAS – ONE A LARGE CITY CALLED BETHSAIDA AND THERE WAS A SMALL VILLAGE ON THE WESTERN SHORE OF THE SEA OF GALILEE, WHICH WAS ALSO KNOWN AS BETHSAIDA JULIA, IN HONOR OF ONE OF THE ROMAN LEADERS’ DAUGHTER.

THE NAME BETHSAIDA MEANS “PLACE OF FISHING OR HUNTING.”

BETHSAIDA WAS THE HOME BASE FOR THREE OF HIS DISCIPLES – PHILIP, ANDREW AND JOHN.

MARK SHOWS US SOMETHING THAT NO OTHER GOSPEL WRITER SHOWS US.

THIS MIRACLE IS NOT SOME CARBON-COPY MIRACLE.

THIS MIRACLE IS NOT AKIN TO ANY OTHER MIRACLE THAT IS FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE AND JOHN.

THIS IS A UNIQUE MIRACLE! IT’S NOT DUPLICATED ANYWHERE ELSE!

IT IS UNIQUE BECAUSE IT STARTS OFF WITH A CROWD OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BROUGHT A BLIND MAN, NOT TO A MAJOR CITY TO SEEK ALMS AND BEG FOR MONEY.

NO, THEY HAVE BROUGHT HIM TO JESUS.

JESUS RECEIVES THIS BLIND MAN AND TOUCHES HIM THREE TIMES!

(I). HIS FIRST TOUCH IS OF SEPARATION

THIS BLIND MAN HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO JESUS, AND BEING SURROUNDED BY A CROWD, INSTEAD OF DOING ONE OF HIS GREAT MIRACLES RIGHT THEN AND THERE, JESUS TOOK HIM BY THE HAND AND REMOVED HIM FROM THE AREA.

I NEED TO SAY I AM PUZZLED BUT I'M NOT SURPRISED.

THERE IS NO WRITTEN AFFIRMATION THAT THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT THIS BLIND MAN TO JESUS WERE SPIRITUAL THEMSELVES.

IT'S SIMPLY A CROWD – BUT WE DON'T KNOW IF IT'S A SPIRITUAL CROWD OR IF THEY WERE JUST TRYING TO GET RID OF THIS BLIND MAN.

BIBLICAL NARRATIVES SUGGEST THAT THIS BLIND MAN DIDN'T EVEN LIVE IN BETHSAIDA.

HOWEVER HE WINDS UP IN A SMALL VILLAGE AND WHEN THEY HEAR THAT JESUS IS IN THE AREA – THEY HAND HIM OVER TO JESUS.

JESUS LEADS HIM OUT OF THE VILLAGE AWAY FROM THE PEOPLE OF BETHSAIDA.

I NEED TO SAY THAT SOME PEOPLE CAN BE A SUPPORT TO YOU IN THE TIME OF TROUBLE, BUT SOME PEOPLE CAN HINDER YOUR SPIRITUAL PROGRESS, MESS UP YOUR SPIRIT, TROUBLE YOUR SOUL.

JESUS SEPARATES THE BLIND MAN FROM THE CROWD!

MAYBE SOMEBODY IN HERE NEEDS THE TOUCH OF JESUS TO DO SOME SEPARATION IN YOUR OWN LIVES . . .

1. **SOME OF YOUR KINFOLK CAN BLOCK YOUR BLESSINGS!**
2. **SOME OF YOUR ROOMMATES CAN HINDER YOUR SUCCESS!**
3. **SOME OF YOUR CO-WORKERS CAN KICK AGAINST YOUR PROGRESS!**
4. **SOME OF YOUR CLASSMATES CAN HOLD YOU BACK!**

JESUS TAKES HIM AWAY FROM THE CROWD TO ESTABLISH A ONE-ON-ONE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AND TO AVOID PUBLICITY – BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, JESUS TAKES HIM AWAY FROM THE CROWD TO REMOVE HIM AND RE-DIRECT HIM TO THE PROPER SOURCE OF RELIEF.

(I). HIS FIRST TOUCH WAS A TOUCH OF SEPARATION

(II). HIS SECOND TOUCH OF HEALING

WHEN JESUS TAKES THE BLIND MAN INTO THE UNINCORPORATED OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE HE TOUCHES HIM AGAIN –TO HEAL HIM.

BUT THIS IS NOT A COOKIE-CUTTER EXPERIENCE.

THIS EVENT OF HEALING IS NOT FOUND ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT!

JESUS DECIDES TO SPIT UPON HIS EYES AND THEN, FOR THE SECOND TIME, HE TOUCHES HIM – THIS TIME UPON HIS EYES.

NOW, I'VE BEEN LOOKING AROUND IN MEDICAL BOOKS AND ON THE INTERNET – BUT I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THIS TYPE OF THERAPY FOR TREATING OR CURING BLINDNESS.

JESUS LITERALLY SPIT UPON THIS MAN.

IN OUR CULTURE TODAY, SPITTING UPON ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL IS LEWD BEHAVIOR.

IT IS THE HEIGHT OF INSULT TO SPIT UPON ANOTHER HUMAN BEING.

PARENTS HAVE SEVERELY DISCIPLINED THEIR CHILDREN FOR SPITTING UPON ANOTHER CHILD.

ATHELETES HAVE BEEN EJECTED AND SUSPENDED FOR A SEASON FOR SPITTING UPON ANOTHER PLAYER OR AN UMPIRE OR A FAN.

I DON'T MIND DEBATE, I DON'T MIND DISAGREEMENT – BUT DON'T YOU SPIT ON ME.

I WOULD LOSE MY MIND UP IN UP IN HERE.

I WOULD BE TEMPTED TO DO, LIKE THE OLD FOLK SAY, LAY MY 'LEGION DOWN.

I'M NOT ALONE – LET SOMEONE SPIT ON SOME OF YOU IN HERE - IN YOUR CHURCH CLOTHES . . .

HOWEVER, I'M STILL THINKING HOW GROSS AND REPUGNANT IT WAS FOR JESUS TO SPIT ON A MAN. BUT THIS SHOWS US TWO THINGS:

- 1. FIRST, IT SHOWS US THAT JESUS IS NOT LIMITED IN WHAT HE CAN DO.**

I DARE YOU TO SPIT IN YOUR HANDS AND LAY IT ON YOURSELF – NOTHING WILL HAPPEN.

I DARE YOU TO NOT ONLY TRY THAT – TRY WALKING ON WATER – NOTHING WILL HAPPEN.

TRY TURNING WATER INTO WINE – NOTHING WILL HAPPEN.

TRY BEING TRANSFIGURED ON A MOUNTAINSIDE – NOTHING WILL HAPPEN.

TRY GETTING NAILED TO A CROSS AND BURIED IN A BORROWED TOMB – NOTHING WILL HAPPEN.

THAT'S BECAUSE JESUS IS NOT LIMITED IN WHAT HE CAN DO.

- 2. SECONDLY, IT SHOWS US THAT JESUS MAY NOT BE CONVENTIONAL, BUT HE IS EFFECTIVE.**

IF I HAD BEEN THAT BLIND MAN, I MAY HAVE BEEN TICKED OFF AT FIRST, BUT WHEN I STARTED TO SEE, I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE HAD A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE.

JESUS SPIT UPON THIS MAN'S EYES.

I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COMPREHEND IT. I DON'T HAVE A CLINICAL DEFINITION FOR IT.

ALL I KNOW IS THAT AFTER JESUS SPIT UPON HIS EYES – AND LAID HIS HANDS ON THIS BLIND MAN - THE PROCESS OF HEALING BEGAN!

THIS BLIND MAN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS WAS ABLE TO SEE THROUGH CLOUDED EYES.

HE SAW THE DISCIPLES APPARENTLY AND TO HIM THEY APPEARED IN THE FORM OF LARGE TREES WALKING.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WHEN JESUS DOES THINGS THAT ARE OUT OF THE BOX, IT MAY CONFUSE AND CONFOUND YOU OR YOUR FRIENDS.

I'VE LEARNED TO STOP ASKING SO MANY QUESTIONS, STOP HATING ON SITUATIONS.

LISTEN, DON'T BE PERPLEXED JUST CELEBRATE WHAT HE IS DOING!

- 1. IF YOU GET A JOB AND YOU AREN'T QUALIFIED FOR IT – JUST CELEBRATE.**

2. IF YOU GET A CAR AND YOU DON'T HAVE CREDIT FOR IT – JUST CELEBRATE.
3. IF YOU GET A MAN AND YOU AREN'T LOOKING LIKE BEYONCE – JUST CELEBRATE.
4. IF YOU GET A WOMAN AND YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE DENZEL – JUST CELEBRATE.
5. IF YOU GET A SCHOLARSHIP AND YOU'RE GRADES ARE LOW – JUST CELEBRATE.
6. IF YOU GET HEALED AND THE DOCTOR SAYS I DON'T KNOW HOW – JUST CELEBRATE.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT SOME OF YOU DON'T WANT TO CELEBRATE BECAUSE YOU THINK THAT THE LORD HAS PASSED YOU BY.

HE HASN'T PASSED YOU BY – HE'S BEEN GOOD TO YOU.

HE'S NOT RUN OUT OF BLESSINGS. CELEBRATE SOMEBODY ELSE'S MIRACLE!!!

- I. HIS FIRST TOUCH WAS A TOUCH OF SEPARATION.
- II. HIS SECOND TOUCH WAS A TOUCH OF HEALING.
- (III). HIS THIRD TOUCH OF COMPLETION.

NOTICE HERE THAT THIS IS THE ONLY NEW TESTAMENT TEXT INVOLVING JESUS THAT WAS NOT AN IMMEDIATE HEALING, BUT RATHER IT WAS A PROGRESSIVE HEALING.

IMMEDIATE MEANS RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW.

BUT PROGRESSIVE MEANS A STARTING POINT HERE AND IT GETS BETTER OVER TIME!

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT JESUS HEALED SOME PEOPLE IMMEDIATELY:

1. HE HEALED OTHER BLIND PEOPLE IMMEDIATELY.
2. HE HEALED THE DEAF IMMEDIATELY.
3. HE HEALED THOSE WITH THE PALSYP IMMEDIATELY.
4. HE HEALED A WITHERED HAND IMMEDIATELY.
5. HE HEALED AN ISSUE OF BLOOD IMMEDIATELY.
6. HE HEALED THE DROPSY IMMEDIATELY.
7. HE HEALED A FEVER IMMEDIATELY.
8. HE HEALED LEPROSY IMMEDIATELY.
9. HE PLACED A DETACHED EAR BACK IN PLACE IMMEDIATELY.
10. HE CASTED OUT DEMONS IMMEDIATELY.

THIS MAN'S HEALING IS NOT IMMEDIATE. IT'S PROGRESSIVE.

SOME OF YOU IN HERE HAVE BEEN WAITING AND WAITING ON THE LORD.

YOU'VE GOT PART OF YOUR MIRACLE – BUT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING AND WAITING ON THE LORD TO COME THROUGH.

YOUR MIRACLE MAY NOT BE IMMEDIATE, IT MAY BE PROGRESSIVE!

JESUS TOOK HIS HANDS AND TOUCHED THIS MAN – BUT THIS TIME HE MADE HIM LOOK UP.

THIS SUGGESTS THAT THIS MAN WAS USED TO LOOKING DOWNWARD – BUT IF YOU NEED A MIRACLE, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LOOK UP.

1. YOU HAVE TO STOP LOOKING FOR MEN TO COME THROUGH;

2. YOU HAVE TO STOP LOOKING FOR THE LOTTERY TO CHANGE YOUR SITUATION.
3. PUT AWAY YOUR LUCKY RABBIT FOOT. MIRACLES COME FROM GOD! I NEED TO LOOK UP!

"I WILL LIFT UP MY EYES TO THE HILLS, FROM WHENCE COMETH MY HELP, MY HELP COMES FROM THE LORD." I'M GOING TO HAVE TO LOOK UP.

WHEN I ENTERED INTO THE TEMPLE I SAW THE LORD HIGH AND LIFTED UP. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO LOOK UP.

SOMEBODY HERE HAS BEEN LOOKING DOWN ON OTHER PEOPLE, DOWN ON YOUR OWN CIRCUMSTANCES, DOWN ON YOUR TROUBLES –

YOU NEED TO REALIGN YOU VISION AND LOOK UNTO JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND THE FINISHER OF OUR FAITH.

A FEW MINUTES AGO HE WAS A BLIND MAN.

HE GOES FROM A BLIND MAN TO A MAN WHO CAN PARTIALLY SEE.

HE THEN BECOMES A MAN WHO HAS BEEN RESTORED.

SOMEBODY HERE KNOWS THAT FORMULA – I WAS LOST IN SIN. I HEARD THE GOSPEL. AND NOW I AM SAVED!

THE BIBLE SAYS HE SAW EVERY MAN CLEARLY – FOR THE FIRST TIME.

1. HE DIDN'T NEED GLASSES.
2. HE DIDN'T NEED CONTACTS.
3. HE DIDN'T NEED SURGERY.
4. HE DIDN'T NEED A PRESCRIPTION – BECAUSE HE HAD JESUS!

NOTICE THAT THE PROCESS BEGAN WITH JESUS AND THE PROCESS IS COMPLETE WITH JESUS!

SOMEBODY HERE KNOWS THAT HE MAY NOT COME WHEN YOU WANT HIM TO, BUT HE'S ALWAYS ON TIME!

CONCLUSION

I'M CLOSING HERE – BUT WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM:

- 1. YOU DON'T NEED FRIENDS.**
- 2. YOU DON'T NEED ADVICE FROM OPRAH.**
- 3. YOU DON'T NEED A HOROSCOPE.**
- 4. WHAT YOU NEED IS JESUS!**

I'M SO GLAD THAT I KNOW HIM FOR MYSELF.

I'M SO GLAD THAT I'VE TRIED HIM FOR MYSELF.

JESUS SAYS TO THIS SEEING MAN, DON'T GO INTO THE VILLAGE. GO BACK TO YOUR HOME.

JESUS REMINDS US THAT EVERYBODY CAN'T HANDLE YOUR BLESSINGS.

EVERYBODY CAN'T CELEBRATE WHAT THE LORD HAD DONE FOR YOU IN YOUR LIFE.

- 1. IS THERE ANYBODY HERE THAT CAN CELEBRATE WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN YOUR LIFE?**
- 2. IS THERE ANYBODY HERE THAT CAN CELEBRATE WHAT GOD IS DOING IN YOUR LIFE?**
- 3. IS THERE ANYBODY HERE THAT CAN CELEBRATE IN ADVANCE WHAT GOD WILL DO IN YOUR LIFE?**

ILLUSTRATION

ON THANKSGIVING I WAS AT MY SISTER-IN-LAW'S HOUSE, AND I WAS REMINDED OF A PRACTICE THAT MAMA TAUGHT US.

WHEN WE WOULD HAVE DINNER, WE LEARNED HOW TO SAY, "LORD THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD WE'RE ABOUT TO RECEIVE."

SOMETIMES IT WAS A LITTLE, SOMETIMES IT WAS A LOT, SOMETIMES IT WAS BEFORE US, SOMETIMES IT WAS STILL IN THE KITCHEN.

BUT WE LEARNED HOW TO SAY THANK YOU FOR WHAT WE WERE ABOUT TO RECEIVE EVEN WHEN WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS.

SOMEBODY HERE NEEDS TO SAY THANK YOU LORD!

- 1. THANK YOU FOR MY HEALING THAT NOBODY ELSE IS GOING TO CELEBRATE!**
- 2. THANK YOU FOR THE SECRET BLESSINGS YOU HAVE GIVEN ME.**
- 3. THANK YOU FOR MAKING A WAY OUT OF NO WAY!**
- 4. THANK YOU LORD FOR GOING TO CALVARY.**
- 5. THANK YOU LORD FOR DYING ON THAT CROSS.**
- 6. THANK YOU LORD FOR GOING INTO THE GRAVE.**
- 7. THANK YOU LORD FOR GETTING UP EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, WITH ALL POWER IN YOUR HAND.**
- 8. THANK YOU LORD FOR SAVING MY SOUL.**
- 9. THANK YOU LORD FOR TOUCHING ME.**
- 10. THANK YOU LORD FOR MAKING ME WHOLE.**

**“I WAS SHACKLED BY A HEAVY BURDEN,
NEATH A LOAD OF GUILT AND SHAME,
THEN THE HANDS OF JESUS TOUCHED ME,
AND NOW I AM NO LONGER THE SAME.**

**SINCE I MET THIS BLESSED SAVIOR,
SINCE HE CLEANSED AND MADE ME WHOLE,
I SHALL NEVER CEASE TO PRAISE HIM,
I’LL SHOUT IT WHILE ETERNITY ROLLS.**

**HE TOUCHED, ME OH, HE TOUCHED ME,
AND OH THE JOY THAT FLOODS MY SOUL,
SOMETHING HAPPENED, AND NOW I KNOW,
HE TOUCHED ME, AND MADE ME WHOLE.”**

(CLOSE)