Believing Is Seeing

What Do You Believe about God?

This past week I tried to cover up some blue die that had been splashed onto my bookshelf. I thought I knew what type of white I needed to match what was there, but when I came back and started to cover over the blotches, the paint didn't match what was on the shelf. So then I carved off a sliver of paint from the shelf and brought it to the paint store. It was run through the Spectrophotometer to determine the exact color of paint. They fixed a can for me and I brought it back, brushed it on the shelf and it too did not match. Being partially color blind, I have wished I could see what others see. But even better, wouldn't it be of great value to see what God sees, to view life as He does? If a grandmother is trying to decide where to move, wouldn't it be valuable to know where God thinks she should move? If a young man is thinking of proposing, wouldn't it help to know if God thinks he should? A couple who is encouraged to invest their life savings in a fund would sure benefit from God letting them know what to do. High school students trying to decide where to go to college or even if they should go to college could use God's insight. How valuable would it be for a new mom to know whether or not to return to work? Could God have something to say about that? The Bible Is full of information on how best to live but it also tells us that God can reveal to us what we can't see, can show us how to respond to what we face. In our text today, we will look at a special miracle that provides important insight into what God can do for us that would be of great importance to us. Our big idea comes from this account. You will see things only God can show you if you seek Him.

One of the great miracles described in the Bible is that of a man born blind that Jesus enabled to see. The disciples spotted a guy they must have known and asked Jesus whose sin caused the man's blindness. Was it his own sin or something his parents did wrong that brought on his blindness? Many ask the same question, believing troubles always come because of some sin committed and it is God's way of punishing them. **"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."** (John 9: 3 NIV) Jesus made it clear that the cause of troubles is not something His disciples or us should give our greatest attention. What they needed to notice was what God would do about it. And Jesus did do something that may have seemed quirky at the time but brought great joy to the blindman. He made mud by spitting on some dirt and then He spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. Jesus next told the man to walk down to the pool of Siloam and wash it off. There was no promise of a miracle if He did. Actually no promise at all, just a command of God. Now this pool was a long way off, especially for a blind man and he had to go down thirty-three stone steps to get to it. Notice something here. In order for the blind man to see, he first had to believe. That is a spiritual axiom found throughout Scripture. To have the miracle, you must first believe it is coming. The blind man had to do the hard work of believing first before He was given sight. **So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.** (John 9: 7b NIV) First you believe, then you see.

The miracle was a spectacular gift of God for the blind man but for the disciples and for us too, it was and is a sign. Keep in mind that the blind man could do nothing himself to gain the sight Jesus gave him. He could not wave his arms, shout loudly to make it happen, find a physician who could do the job or will himself to seeing. It was all up to God to do it except for the important detail of him having to believe it would be done. God will give you sight also if you believe He can and will. Not that physical sight the blind man received but the sight you need to know what to do, how to decide things. God has sight for you too. You must believe He can and will give it to you. Let me share a few examples to illustrate what I mean. Just after Jesus was born, a faithful man who longed to see God's promise of a Messiah fulfilled, experienced the sort of sight the Holy Spirit can give you. The Holy Spirit somehow let this man, Simeon know that he would not die before he met the Messiah. Listen to this. **Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.** (Luke 2: 27a NIV) And who should he find in the temple courts? The newborn Jesus was there, and the Lord let Simeon see that the tiny baby was the Messiah and gleefully Simeon, with the permission of his parents, took Jesus into his arms and praised God. How could Simeon see that the Temple was the place to come upon the Messiah and that the baby there was Him? God gave him sight, but to see the Messiah, Simeon had to believe the Holy Spirit was sending him there.

After the early church was forming and Jesus had ascended to heaven, one of the leaders in the church, the deacon Philip was walking down a rural desert road because the Lord, through an angel, told him to make his way there. As he went along, God showed Philip someone to go visit. **The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."** (Acts 8: 29 NIV) In the chariot was an African high ranking official who was reading a scroll that had the writings of

Isaiah on it. When Philip explained to the inquiring African that the passage he was reading was about Jesus and that Jesus had died on the cross and was raised from the dead and would give the African official eternal life, the Ethiopian put his trust in Jesus and was baptized for His faith. This man was one of the most important converts of the early church. After hearing the message of salvation from Philip, he went back to his home country of Ethiopia and brought the Gospel with him where it was received with great joy and a mighty church of believers was formed. How could Philip have seen what a tremendous opportunity was before him if he approached the stranger in the chariot, had not God shown him? If the Holy Spirit did not point out the African and Philip was not willing and eager to see what God showed him, the region of Ethiopia and surrounding areas might have taken generations before salvation came to the people there. God can open your eyes just as perfectly as the man born blind if you believe He can and will do it. He can show you things that are crucial for you and those you love if you believe the Holy Spirit is guiding you.

Here are a couple of examples from the Bible of the Holy Spirit leading the Apostle Paul and those with him, enabling them to see what otherwise they couldn't. Paul, as he was heading toward Jerusalem was shown by the Holy Spirit that by going to Jerusalem, his life would be upended. **I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. (**Acts 20: 23 NIV) Earlier, Paul and his group were directed firmly by the Holy Spirit not to go to a particular part of Turkey that would have seemed to have been a logical place to bring the Gospel. **When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.** (Acts 16:7-8 NIV) You too can be in that state where the Holy Spirit shows you things that you need to make good and wise decisions. There are thousands, maybe even millions of details you don't have access to that are critical to the decisions you make, but the Holy Spirit, who knows them all, can easily let you see what to do and how to think about things.

I recently came upon this statement when I was translating a section of Romans, and it brought me great joy. It reads literally this way. **For as many as are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** (Romans 8: 14) That means that those who are born again, who are sons of God, it is their normal, or expected way of life, to be led by the Spirit of God. Imagine that, if you are available for God to lead you, the Holy Spirit will. What does being available mean? Look for Him to show you what you need to see, what you want to see. By faith, ask for His guidance and then trust the Holy Spirit to show you what He wants you to see. It is so very simple to be led by the Holy Spirit. You ask Him to guide you and then you trust Him to do that. Start with small matters. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what to do about a conversation, a work task, a relationship and then accept the promise of God that He will open your eyes so you can see what only the Holy Spirit can show you. Why trust only yourself in any matter when you have the Holy Spirit there to see as He sees things. Our big idea is an immense one that needs your attention. You will see things only God can show you if you seek Him. Imagine how much better your life can be, the lives of other believers can be if they have the Holy Spirit opening their eyes. Get the word out. Let fellow Christians know this. Do not let a day pass without going to the Holy Spirit and asking Him to open your eyes on each matter before you.