



**John 9**  
**By Chuck Smith**

John tells us that Jesus did many other signs which he did not record. But he did record these signs that you might believe that He is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, and by believing, have life in His name. At the end of the book John said, "I suppose if everything that could be written was written, that all of the libraries of the world could not contain the things that could be written concerning Jesus Christ" (John 21:25). John picked out eight signs that Jesus did. The eight signs that proved that He was the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Tonight in chapter nine, we are looking at the seventh of the eight signs. And in this sign, Jesus the only time recorded in the gospels healed a person of a genetic problem. Now in the book of Acts, there were two who were healed of genetic problems. Two men who were lame from birth who were healed. But the gospel. No doubt He did heal others but they are not recorded in the gospels with the exception of this man who was born blind. And this is, I said, constitutes the seventh of the eight signs that John shows. The eighth, of course, was the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

So we are still in Jerusalem, still during the time of the feast of the passover, the events that followed the feast of the passover.

*And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. His disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind (9:1,2)?*

They were curious. There was a common feeling and belief that tragedy only came as the result of sin. That a person who is going through a physical, emotional hardship is doing so because of sin. And they felt there was a very direct cause and effect relationship with sin. So when they saw a man who was born blind, the question is, Is God punishing his parents for some sin that they committed? As the scriptures said, that the sins of the fathers will be visited upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who continue in their sins. Is God punishing them for their sins through their child being born blind? Or was he guilty of a prenatal sin? Or did they believe in the pre-existence of the human soul? And thus, who did sin? This man was born blind.

They did believe that it was possible to sin within the womb, and so the question, Whose fault is this? It's interesting how so often when we see human tragedy and human suffering, we're always wanting to find the blame, the cause. Whose fault is this? But it's interesting that Jesus discarded the question as to whose fault it was. He answered it by declaring, Neither him or his parents. They are not responsible for his being born blind. This is just one of those things that God has allowed in order that He might accomplish His purposes.

*So Jesus said, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him (9:3).*

God at times allows us to experience difficulty, hardship, even suffering that He might accomplish His works in our lives. Paul the apostle was given a thorn in the flesh, a minister of Satan, lest he be exalted above measure because of the abundance of revelations that have been given to him. God had allowed this thorn in the flesh because God was wishing to do a special work in Paul which required special revelation.

Paul the apostle speaks of the hardships, the sufferings that he endured. But he said, "Yet we know that the present suffering is not worthy to be compared with the glory that's going to be revealed" (Romans 8:18).

Jesus Himself suffered. He suffered the agony of the cross, the shame of the cross. But again, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12:2). So the purposes of God being worked out in our lives often through hardship or through suffering. God is working His purposes. And so in this man's life, that the works of God should be made manifest in Him. God's work manifested.

And then Jesus declared,

*I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work (9:4).*

Jesus is declaring that this man's condition existed that God might manifest His works and then Jesus declared, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me." What was then the work of God that was

manifested in this man? It was the healing of his blindness.

Oftentimes there is not a direct cause and effect as far as sin and pain go. There is an indirect many times. Good people suffer sicknesses. Good people die of illnesses and of cancer and of other things. It doesn't mean that it is God punishing them because of some sin in their lives. But because of sin in the world, with sin entered death and those things that bring death. So in an overall sense, the suffering of the world is the result of sin. Not necessarily direct cause and effect relationship, but many times indirect. If there have been no sin, there would be no suffering. There would be no death. There would be no pain. It would be a perfect world if it were not for sin.

So all of these things indirectly result from the fact that sin is in the world. And because we are living in this world, God does not give to us a divine immunity against sickness, against viruses, against suffering, against aging. It's just not there. But God is with us and wonderful at times, God will manifest His desire to counteract the effects of sin in the world. So each of us have experienced the touch of God upon our lives in the removing of the blight of sin. God is in the business of restoration. God is in the business of manifesting His power against the consequences of sin in a person's life. That is, again, sin in a general sense in the world.

"I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day," Jesus said. The work of God who sent Him was the healing of this man's blind eyes. Jesus refers to the night that is coming when no man can work. The day when the opportunity of manifesting God's power will be over.

*As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay (9:5,6),*

Why did Jesus use this method of healing the man? There were other blind people who Jesus healed and some of them He healed with just the word. Others He touched their eyes and they could see. Jesus used an unusual method of making a bit of clay, spitting on the dirt and stirring it up, making some clay and putting it in the fellow's eyes. And then commanding him to go down to the pool of Siloam and to wash it out of his eyes.

This happened on the sabbath day. It was specifically forbidden in their tradition and in their interpretation of the law to make clay on the sabbath day. So Jesus is deliberately violating the tradition of their law.

Back in chapter five when Jesus came to the pool of Bethesda and saw the man who was lying there who was lame, and He asked him if he would like to be healed. And he said, Sir, I don't have anybody to help me. When the water is troubled, someone always is there before me. Jesus said, "Take up your cot and go home." And the man was walking home, carrying his cot and the Pharisees caught him and said, What are you doing violating the sabbath day, carrying your cot? He said, The man who healed me told me to take my cot and go home. They said, Who was it? And he said, I really don't know. Later on, when he found out it was Jesus, he went to the Pharisees and told them, It was Jesus.

This began the conspiracy to put Jesus to death because He had violated their traditions and their traditional observance of the sabbath day. And this is what caused the initial breach between Jesus and the Pharisees in Jerusalem.

Now here He is again much later, back in Jerusalem, it is the sabbath day and He is violating their sabbath day on at least two counts. Number one, it was wrong in their estimation to heal on the sabbath day. They had a lot of interesting interpretations of the, what constituted say, violating the sabbath. The sabbath day you were not to bear a burden. They said, If your sandals were held together with nails, you couldn't wear them on the sabbath day because the extra weight of the nails would constitute bearing a burden. They had a lot of little interpretations like this.

And so here is Jesus healing on the sabbath day. They said you can take whatever measures are necessary to save a life but nothing towards curing, nothing towards healing. So you couldn't pour cold water on a sprained ankle. That would be helping it to heal. You had to wait until the sabbath day was over. So the making of clay, violating the sabbath. The healing of the man's blind eyes. It was the sabbath day and this was the flash point with the Pharisees. This is the thing that had so angered them with Jesus. The fact that He would use this method, it wasn't necessary. We know that it wasn't necessary to use this method. And yet Jesus did.

In this there is another interesting concept. And we know that faith has an important part of our relationship with God and receiving from God. Jesus said, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes." We do know that so often our faith is in a passive state. Oh yes, I believe God can do

it. That's rather passive. And you can go your whole life believing that God can do something but never see it done. There's a vast difference between saying, I believe that God can do it, and I believe that God will do it. And there is even a difference between saying, I believe that God will do it, and I believe that God will do it now. When you get to, I believe that God will do it now, you now have an active faith.

But many times, it takes something to trigger that faith into action. Believing now. So that I believe that this is one of the reasons why the Lord commanded that they should lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. That your faith is set to be triggered when the hands are laid upon me and I'm anointed with oil, I know that God will heal me then. Like the woman who said, If I can just but touch the hem of His garment, I know that I'll be healed. And there was that place of contact where the faith was released for the healing now. The moment she grabbed the hem of His garment. The virtue went forth from Christ and she was healed, according to her testimony unto Jesus.

So with Paul, they took the sweatbands when he was in Ephesus and laid them on the sick and they were healed. With Peter, as his shadow would pass on the people, fall on people, they were healed. It's because they had in their minds that point of contact where their faith would be activated. I know that if Peter will just walk by and his shadow falls on me, the moment his shadow falls on me, I know God's going to heal me. And thus, they would line the people in the streets when Peter was walking down the street so that his shadow might fall on them that they might be healed.

Nothing spiritual about Peter's shadow, nothing magical. It was just something that a person's faith was released at that point. And it became active. It could be that with the putting of the clay in the man's eyes it was an opportunity to give a place of activating the faith. Go wash in the pool of Siloam and the man had that feeling, If I wash I'm going to be able to see. And it gave him that opportunity for releasing faith.

But I personally feel that Jesus is just putting mud in the Pharisees eyes, so to speak. He doesn't back away from confrontation.

*And so Jesus told the man, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, [and John tells us] (which by interpretation is, Sent.) (9:7)*

Back in the time of King Hezekiah when Sennacherib was coming with the Assyrian army to invade Judah and to capture Jerusalem, knowing that the armies were on the way, the main water supply was from the virgin spring or called the spring of Gihon which is down in the Kidron Valley, but was outside of the city walls and thus it was very easy for the enemy to cut off their water supply. And so Hezekiah ordered these men to start digging a tunnel through solid rock that would come under the city walls into the city so that they would have this fresh water supply within the city. So a group of men began digging through the rock at the pool, of what became the pool of Siloam, and others from the spring of Gihon. They started digging towards each other. They didn't go in straight lines but sort of back and forth so that 366 feet would be straight through. It was 563 feet is what the tunnel is if you walked through it and they finally met somewhere there in the middle. They could hear each other talking, they realized they were only about nine feet apart. They began to dig towards each other until their picks met each other and the water began to flow from the spring of Gihon to the pool of Siloam. So they called it the pool of Sent because the water was sent through the tunnel from the spring of Gihon into the pool. And so that's where it got its name. Siloam means Sent, the water is sent through this tunnel that was dug by the decree of Hezekiah.

*So the man went his way, washed, and when he washed, he came seeing (9:7).*

He could see. Born blind. Now he can see.

*The neighbours therefore, and they which had seen him that was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged (9:8)?*

Isn't this the blind man who for all of these years was sitting there begging?

*Some said, This is he: others said, That sure looks like him: but he said, I am me (9:9).*

I am the one.

*Therefore they said unto him, [How is it that you can see?] How were your eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus (9:10,11)*

Notice now, the progression of the revelation. He starts out, "A man who is called Jesus,"

*made clay, and He anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then they said unto him, Where is he? He said, I don't know. They brought him to the Pharisees the one that before was blind. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus*

*made the clay, and opened his eyes (9:11-14).*

So you see, here's the sticking point. This was the sabbath day. A direct violation of their interpretation of the sabbath law. You're not to make clay specifically on the sabbath day.

*Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he doesn't keep the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them (9:15,16).*

You can see, here are the old sticklers. Can't be of God, He did this on the sabbath day. Others were saying, But wait a minute, how can a man do these miracles?

You remember when Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees, came to Jesus. He said, We know that you are God because no man can do the things that you do except God be with Him. So Nicodemus and his friends were saying, Wait a minute. How can He do these miracles without the power of God? The division among them.

*They said unto the blind man again, What do you say of him, that he hath opened your eyes? He said, He is a prophet (9:17).*

Now notice, "A man named Jesus," and now he's getting closer, "He is a prophet." It's beginning to sink in what's happened. Just a man could not have opened my eyes. He is a prophet.

*But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called his parents. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, whom you say was born blind (9:18,19)?*

You say that that was the case.

*how is it then he can now see (9:19)?*

It is so difficult to argue against this kind of evidence. What can you say? The guy says, Hey I don't know. But this I do know, I was once blind and now I can see. How can you argue against that evidence?

When Peter and John were going into the temple and the lame man who was a beggar was seeking alms from them, and Peter said, I don't have any silver or gold but what I do have, I'll be glad to give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise to your feet and walk. And he took the man by the right hand, lifted him to his feet and immediately, the man was healed. He began to walk, he began to run through the temple, walking, leaping, praising God. And the people all said, Isn't that the man who has been begging all these years? Sure look like him. How is it that he can walk? Let's find out. And they followed him out to Solomon's porch where Peter was still standing and the man grabbed hold of Peter and John, began to hug them, and probably kissed them and all, and thus they began to relate the miracle to Peter. And Peter then preached a sermon. He was arrested along with the lame man and John. They were brought to trial and the question was, How did you do it? And Peter said, If we are examined this day by what means this lame man is made whole, be it known unto you that it's by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth that this man is standing here whole. And Peter went on to preach to them that there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved. And it said, And seeing the lame man standing there whole, they could say nothing against it.

That's the kind of evidence. Blind people seeing. Lame people walking. How can you argue against that kind of evidence? The greatest proof of Christianity, the greatest evidence for Christianity is you who were once blind but now see. You who were once lame who are now walking in the wholeness and the fullness of Jesus Christ. You whose lives have been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. You make the strongest evidence and the strongest case for the validity of Christianity. Lame man standing whole. Blind people seeing. Messed up lives restored. That kind of evidence, all of the argumentation of the world cannot dispute it.

So they didn't believe that he was blind. Some kind of a rouse. So they brought his parents. Is this your son that you say was born blind? And how is it that he can now see?

*His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, we know that he was born blind (9:20):*

*Who has opened his eyes, we don't know: he is of age; ask him (9:21):*

They're passing the buck.

*They were afraid of the Jews: because the Jews had already determined, that if anybody would acknowledge that Jesus was the Messiah, they would be ex-communicated (9:22).*

They would not be allowed to go into the temple or they would not be allowed to go into the

synagogue. They would be ex-communicated from the religious life of the community.

This goes back to the book of Ezra chapter ten, verse eight where Ezra called a convocation of the people to deal with the problem and he said, "If any man does not come and gather with this convocation, he will be put out of the camp." That is, of the camp of Israel. So following that, they had determined if anybody had confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, they would be put out of the synagogue.

And so his parents were fearful of ex-communication.

*So they said, Look, he's of age; ask him [and he can speak for himself]. Therefore they called the man that was blind, and they said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner (9:23,24).*

Just praise God, we know that this man is a sinner.

*He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or not, I don't know: but one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see (9:25).*

You're saying one thing about Him and I don't know. But this is what I know for certain, I was blind and now I can see.

*Then they said unto him again, What did he do to you? how did He open your eyes (9:26)?*

They're pressing now again. And I think he's sort of tired of it all.

*So he answered and said, I already told you, did you not hear: why would you hear it again? You want to become one of his disciples (9:27)?*

He really got them.

*And they reviled him, they said, You are his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we don't even know where he came from (9:28,29).*

The fellow's into it already so he figures he'll go all the way.

*The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, you don't know from whence he is, and yet he has opened my eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and does his will, him he hears (9:30,31).*

Here's a marvellous thing, fellows. You don't know where He's come from and yet He's opened my eyes.

In the Old Testament, David in the Psalms said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). In Job, he said concerning the hypocrite, "Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him" (Job 27:9)? Isaiah said, "God's hand is not short, that He cannot save; His ear is not heavy, that He cannot hear: But your sins have separated you from God" (Isaiah 59:1,2).

It isn't that God doesn't hear, it's just that your relationship with God has been severed as the result of your sin. And then in Isaiah, God said to the people, "When you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you: yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear: because your hands are full of blood" (Isaiah 1:15). And then in Ezekiel, "Though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them" (Ezekiel 8:18). They believed that God did not hear the prayer of sinners. But they did believe that God heard the prayers of righteous men.

"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and His ears are open to their cry" (Psalm 34:15). He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him: He also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Psalm 145:19). "The Lord is far from the wicked: but He hears the prayers of the righteous" (Proverbs 15:29).

So this man is using their scriptures. He said, We know that the Lord doesn't hear sinners. They've accused Jesus of being a sinner. "Give praise to God because this man is a sinner. And he said, Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. but I do know, I was once blind, and now I can see." He's now saying, "We know that God doesn't hear sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God and does His will, He hears."

*Since the beginning of the world have you ever heard of any man opening the eyes of one who was born blind (9:32).*

Of all of the miracles of the Old Testament, we don't read of anyone born blind who was healed. So this man is calling their attention to that interesting fact. Since the beginning of the world, have you ever heard of a man who was born blind being able to see?

*If this man were not of God, he could do nothing (9:33).*

One of the problems of dealing with a person logically is that when you have them nailed, they become irrational. They forget argumentation and all, and they just become totally irrational. And what this man is saying makes sense. But they don't want to face facts. It's sort of, Our minds are made up

concerning Him, don't confuse us with the facts.

*They answered and said unto him, You were altogether born in sins (9:34),*

They are declaring that his blindness was the result of his prenatal sins. You were born in sin. You were born blind.

*and are you trying to teach us? And they cast him out (9:34).*

Ostracized him. They closed the doors to him.

*When Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him (9:35),*

The indication is here that Jesus looked for him and found him. He heard that the man had been cast out. And so He came to him and He found him, and

*he said unto him, Do you believe on the Son of God (9:35)?*

In those days, they did believe that the Messiah would be the Son of God. That was the common belief among the rabbis. There was that prophecy in Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son of given: the government shall be upon His shoulder: His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). The Son is given. God is going to give His Son. And so, "Do you believe on the Son of God?"

When Jesus said to His disciples, Whom do you say that I am? Peter answered and said, You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God. When Jesus was being questioned by the high priest at His trial, he said, Are you the Messiah? And Jesus said, You said it. He said, Are you then the Son of God? And again Jesus said, You said it. But you see, the one question followed the other. If You say that You are the Messiah, then You are saying, You are the Son of God. Because at that time, they did believe that the Messiah would be the Son of God.

At the present time, they have changed that opinion. Today they say that they do not believe that Jesus is the Messiah because He claimed to be the Son of God and they said, We do not believe that the Messiah will be the Son of God. That reflects a change in the whole teaching of the rabbis and a change that was brought about because of Jesus Christ. But at that time, the rabbis did believe that the Messiah would be the Son of God. Today they take the prophecy of Moses, "There shall arise a Prophet like unto myself; to Him you shall give heed" (Deuteronomy 18:15). And they say, Moses was a man, and thus the Messiah will be a man. But again, the logical question: If the Messiah is a man, how will you know that He is the Messiah? How will you recognize Him? And their answer to that is, He will lead us in the rebuilding of our temple.

And so the Jews today are looking for a man to come and lead them in the rebuilding of the temple, ready to acclaim Him as their Messiah. Jesus said, "I came in My Father's name, you did not receive Me: another one will come in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5:43). He came declaring that He was the Son of God. A man will come, not claiming to be a Son of God. They will receive him and after that, He will then claim to be God Himself. He will come to the rebuilt temple, stand in the holy of holies and declare that he is God and demand to be worshipped as God.

But Jesus said to him, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" on the Messiah?

*He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that is talking with you (9:36,37).*

Sort of like the woman of Samaria who said to Jesus, We know that when the Messiah comes, He is going to teach us all things. And Jesus said, Woman, I who am speaking to you, am He. So here again, Jesus acknowledges, not publicly, but to this man who had been ostracized by the religious system of the day the fact that He was the Messiah, Son of God.

*And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him (9:38).*

How is it that you can see? A man named Jesus put clay in my eyes and told me to wash and I can see. But then it went from that, Who do you say that He is? I think He's a prophet. And now, Jesus said, Do you believe on the Son of God? Who is He, Lord? And He said, The One who is speaking to you. And he said, I believe. And he worshipped Him. The progressive revelation that ultimately brought him to the place of worship.

And that is God's purpose in the revealing of Jesus Christ to us, to ultimately bring us to the place of worshipping Jesus. You remember when Jesus was in Galilee and they opened up the roof of the house to let the man down with palsy. Jesus said unto the man, Your sins are forgiven. They said, Who can forgive sins but God? And Jesus said, That you might know that the Son of God has power on earth to forgive sins. What's easier to say, Your sins are forgiven; Arise, take up your bed and walk? Here again,

the idea of the proof by the healing of this man with palsy. Said to the man, Take up your bed and walk. And he did. More difficult to do that than to say, Your sins are forgiven. But showing that He is God.

And so here, only God is to be worshipped. Jesus allowed him to worship Him.

*And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind (9:39).*

He's come to open the eyes of the blind that they might see the truth of God. And yet, those who are pretending to see, taking positions of leadership in a religious sense, declaring to be in the light, might be blind.

*And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If you were blind, you would have no sin: but now you say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth (9:40,41).*

It's so important that we not allow ourselves to be blinded by prejudice, by pre-conceived ideas and by tradition. These are three things that blind people to the truth. There is traditional religion. And so many people are blinded by the traditions. You've met them. You've seen them. You perhaps know them. And this is within the church. People who worship by tradition but they don't know the truth of Jesus Christ. They don't know what it is to be born again.

People who are blinded by prejudice. They have their own bias, their own opinions. And they can't see it any other way. And people who are blinded by pre-conceived ideas. Whenever I come to the Word of God, I pray, Lord, don't let me be blinded by prejudice, by pre-conceived ideas, by traditions. But let my heart be open that Your Holy Spirit might teach me Your truth from Your Word. And I highly recommend that as a prayer for you when you come to the Word of God.

Don't come with pre-conceived ideas. Be willing to let the Word of God speak to you over and above the traditions and over and above your prejudice. Be open to the Spirit of God instructing us from the Word of God as He leads us into the truth of God.

Father, thank You that Your word is true. And Lord, we know how easy it is to fall into tradition, into interpreting the scripture by our preconceived ideas. Or oftentimes by our early training. So that we develop a bias, a prejudice. And Lord, our eyes then are closed. We're not open to the things that You would teach and show to us from Your Word. Lord, we thank You that where we were once blind, now we see. Thank You for opening our eyes to that life in Christ that we can enjoy. Thank You, Father, that You have caused us to be born again by the Spirit of God and coming into this dimension of the Spirit, we can walk in the light even as You are in the light. And so Lord, help us. Help us to ever be open to hear Your voice as You speak to us through the Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.