

**The 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, August 11, 2024**  
**“Close Encounters with Jesus: The Cure For Spiritual Blindness”**  
**John 9:1-25**

Change and Transformation is \_\_\_\_\_ to Christianity.

“...until Christ is formed in you.” (Galatians 4:19)

“...conformed to the image of God’s Son.” (Romans 8:29)

“...transformed by the renewing of our minds.” (Romans 12:2)

For Paul, spiritual growth was a \_\_\_\_\_ process, through which we’re gradually changed into the likeness of \_\_\_\_\_.

This is the what the Gospel is all about: \_\_\_\_\_ people like you and me doing \_\_\_\_\_ things, through the transforming power of the \_\_\_\_\_.

Spiritual blindness is the inability to see and understand spiritual \_\_\_\_\_—especially the truth about \_\_\_\_\_. People who are spiritually blind see only what their \_\_\_\_\_ eyes show them, and lack the faith to see beyond the physical world to the things of \_\_\_\_\_.

We’re all born spiritually \_\_\_\_\_—we’re physical creatures living in a physical world.

“Open my eyes to see your wonderful truths...” (Psalm 119:18)

The only cure for spiritual blindness is \_\_\_\_\_—a prescription that opens the eyes of our \_\_\_\_\_, bringing life into a godly \_\_\_\_\_. It’s only the through the \_\_\_\_\_ working within us, that we can get beyond our spiritual blindness and begin to see the world as God sees it.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free...” (Luke 4:18)

**SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH**

**#1. Get rid of \_\_\_\_\_.**

“His disciples asked Him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that

the was born blind?’” (John 9:2)

It was the understanding of the day that all sickness was a result of \_\_\_\_\_.

Not only was this belief \_\_\_\_\_, it trapped them in seeing this man’s situation as totally \_\_\_\_\_. That’s what either/or thinking does: it traps us. It doesn’t allow for any other \_\_\_\_\_ or solutions.

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him.” (John 9:3)

The disciples were asking the wrong question. They were looking for someone to \_\_\_\_\_, but there’s no such cause and effect here.

Instead of feeling trapped or \_\_\_\_\_, instead of focusing on our own situation, we need to look to \_\_\_\_\_ and what He can do. Instead of either/or, we need to look for God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

This required the disciples to have an entirely different way of thinking and \_\_\_\_\_ because God’s 3<sup>rd</sup> option always involves \_\_\_\_\_.

Scripture shows us over and over again that God can change anything—especially things that we can’t change. Sometimes God changes circumstances, but more often, He changes \_\_\_\_\_.

**How might you apply this?**

**Could you benefit from a different way of looking at life and faith?**

**Are you stuck in either/or thinking? Do you feel trapped in life?**

**#2. Step out \_\_\_\_\_.**

“Go and wash in the pool of Siloam. So the man went and washed and he came back seeing.” (John 9:7)

Although it sounded strange, that’s exactly what Jesus told him to do, and when he \_\_\_\_\_, a miracle happened.

...that’s how miracles often happened in Scripture—someone doing something very \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

It’s amazing how God can take the \_\_\_\_\_ step of faith—even with \_\_\_\_\_ people—and make an incredible difference in their lives. Although we might think, “This isn’t going to work,” when we take that first step of faith, we give God a \_\_\_\_\_. We open a door. And it’s incredible what God can do.

**Where do you need a miracle in you life?  
Where do you need to see change?  
What little step are you prepared to take?**

**#3. \_\_\_\_\_ even in the face of \_\_\_\_\_.**  
After the man is healed, he immediately faces \_\_\_\_\_.

Instead of rejoicing in the miracle that had taken place, the people refused to believe and \_\_\_\_\_ the man.

This story shows us the sad reality that there's always going to be those people who \_\_\_\_\_ and try to get us to doubt as well. People who will try to steal our \_\_\_\_\_, destroy our dreams, and rob us of hope.

If we learn anything from this encounter, it's not to let the past blind us to the \_\_\_\_\_, not to let other people's \_\_\_\_\_ voices and lack of faith blind us to what God can do. As we're told several times in the Bible: "With God \_\_\_\_\_ things are possible."

It all starts here—with us deciding if we really and truly \_\_\_\_\_ that with God, **all** things are possible.

**"How big is your God?"**

**Do you serve an itty-bitty God or a great big God?  
What's bigger your problems and challenges or God?**

This is an important question to ask yourself—because our faith \_\_\_\_\_ on it. If our problems are bigger, if God is \_\_\_\_\_ in what He can do in our lives, then why bother?

Faith in God is about so much more than just \_\_\_\_\_ on Sunday morning. It's about what we do Monday to Saturday, it's about having \_\_\_\_\_ and believing that nothing is impossible for God.

When the flames of faith flicker, there are those who'll gently fan them so they'll \_\_\_\_\_ and grow. And sadly, there are those who'll \_\_\_\_\_ them with a big bucket of water.

That's what church is all about: \_\_\_\_\_ each other, building each other up, and \_\_\_\_\_ the flames of faith—to help each other believe that nothing is impossible for God, that change is possible; and then \_\_\_\_\_ that change in each other's lives.

**Which are you—a fanner or a douser?**

John tells us that the \_\_\_\_\_ argued with the man and threatened to throw him out of the synagogue. They even held a mock trial and dragged in his parents and other witnesses. Why? Because the miracle happened on the Sabbath—a day when the law forbid Jewish people to \_\_\_\_\_.

If you think about it, it was a \_\_\_\_\_ thing that kept the Pharisees from believing. After all, what's more important: religious \_\_\_\_\_ or a miracle?

It's amazing how \_\_\_\_\_ things can keep us from having faith in a big God. And so, like the Pharisees, we need to let God out of the little \_\_\_\_\_ that we keep Him in. The blind man did, and look what happened! We need to let God be \_\_\_\_\_: in the Church, in the world, and in our lives.

**What minor things keep you from believing?**

**What minor things keep you from seeing the new thing that God wants to do in you life?**



A close encounter with Jesus has the power to \_\_\_\_\_ one's life forever. The man born blind had an encounter I'm sure he never forgot. His life was changed forever. Not only did Jesus restore his physical sight, but by shining His light into the darkness of the man's \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus restored his spiritual sight and gave him a new kind of \_\_\_\_\_.

It's ironic that his neighbours and friends and even the religious leaders of the time were unable to accept what happened. They may have had eyes and were able to physically see, yet, they were \_\_\_\_\_ blind to the miracle that had just taken place.

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

The truth is, we're all \_\_\_\_\_ to some degree—that is until the light of Jesus shines in our \_\_\_\_\_.

"The Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are weighed down. The Lord loves the godly." (Psalm 146:8)

Although the Lord opens the eyes of the blind, it's up to us to \_\_\_\_\_ to Him and pray that our blindness be taken away. The worst thing that we can do is fool ourselves into thinking that our blindness is \_\_\_\_\_—that we know what's best, right, and \_\_\_\_\_.