

## Daily Bible Study

“20/20”

*Mark 8:22-26*

*October 10 - 16, 2010*

**THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY** – This week as we continue along in our study of the Gospel of Mark we are looking at a story which is exclusive to Mark’s Gospel. Our text is **Mark 8:22-26**. The lesson is entitled “20/20” and by God’s grace we will “see” (pun intended) the many truths that God has for us in this piece of Sacred Scripture. This story is not only unique in the fact that it is found only here in Mark’s record but it is also very interesting in how the details of the story unfold. A blind man is brought to Jesus in this text and as we have seen previously (**7:31-37**) Jesus deals with him as an individual; meeting and sympathizing with his need. Some questions are naturally raised when we look at the way in which Jesus heals him and how the healing takes place. We will point and explain the text and that regardless of what may appear as a “process” of healing, this man was completely and perfectly healed and walked away with perfect sight bestowed on Him by The Creator God. Although the text does not clearly say this, by way of application Jesus seems to be teaching both His disciples and us regarding the process of maturing and deepening in our understanding of spiritual matters. Read the text: **Mark 8:22-26** “*Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.”*”

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father God, Help me hear You speak from Your Word this week. And as the text deals with blindness, help me have spiritual “eyes to see” what truths You want me to learn.*

**TUESDAY** – **Mark 8:22-23** “*Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him.*” Our text starts out by giving us some geography as it says that Jesus came to *Bethsaida*. We know from Scripture that *Bethsaida* is the hometown of Peter, Andrew, and Philip (**John 1:44**). This is actually not really a joyful homecoming but in the big picture, this is actually a sad day for this town and area. This is one of the places that Jesus would indict in His infamous “woes” because they had seen some incredible proofs of who Jesus was and failed to believe. It is interesting that Jesus points out in those “woes” that if *Tyre and Sidon*

had seen all His works they would have repented long ago (**Matthew 11:21, Luke 10:13**). But Jesus, by His grace is once again here in *Bethsaida* and we find that some people *brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him*. Like we see in many of Jesus miracles there are individuals involved that are bringing needy people to Christ for healing. We can't determine the motives of all these individuals but we can assume that there was some genuine concern and compassion on the part of some of them. We surmise this from the text where words are used such as *begged Him to touch him*. Notice that it is in the *touch* of Jesus that men find healing; both spiritually and physically. Faith in itself can't save anyone; salvation is found in the object of ones faith. The object of true saving faith is Jesus. Only faith in The Lord Jesus Christ can save the souls of the lost (**Acts 4:12**).

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Thank, praise, and believe Jesus; that He lived the perfect life which obeyed and fulfilled all Gods demands and that He took upon Himself the punishment for your sin. Ask Him to help you have love, care and compassion for those who have not experienced His salvation and the strength and courage to tell them of the good news found only in Jesus.*

**WEDNESDAY – Mark 8:23** “*So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.*” As we saw before as in **Mark 7:33**, *Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town.* Jesus takes this blind man out and away from the crowd and deals with him uniquely and considerately. He is no “Cable Television” healer shouting and flailing around out of control. He is loving, considerate, caring and in a pure way, calculated. Interesting to note is that Jesus *took the blind man by the hand and led him*. The man was guided to Jesus by others and now Jesus Himself becomes “The Guide” if you will as He leads the man away. As He did with the deaf man in **7:33** Jesus now applies a personal and what seems to be a somewhat bizarre method as He *spit on his eyes and put His hands on him*. The ancient world did have beliefs concerning the healing power of saliva but Jesus (in my opinion) appears to be merely intimately pointing out to this man that He is going to help Him and it is in union with Him and being united to Him that true healing is found. What comfort, anticipation, hope, and expectancy must have come to this man as Jesus personally puts His hands on Him in what appears to be a sign of assurance of help and healing. Jesus now involves the man himself in this healing by drawing him in asking *if he saw anything*. The Lord heals, saves, and even gives faith to believe for salvation but that does not cancel the responsibility of individuals to trust and obey Him. Jesus has brought this man away from the crowd so that he will be focused on Him and now in a personal and relational way communicates, leads, and asks this man to participate in the interaction. God is the ultimate “primary causality” of all things but in fact under God’s sovereign control there are also “secondary causes” such as choices we make which all carry out His eternal plan and decree. May we like this blind man, come close to Jesus,

listen to Him, touch Him, be united to Him and do what He says to us. As believers today we hear Him and see Him primarily through His Word. Read **Philippians 2:12-13**.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, You are in perfect and total control over all things; praise You! Thank You for calling me into relationship and communion with You by faith. Help me to see You not as some Robotic, unloving Sovereign, but rather as The loving God who is personal and caring.*

**THURSDAY– Mark 8:24 - 25** “*And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.*” This portion of the Scripture text has caused some unnecessary confusion and questions for many. Even after careful diligent study there does remain some uncertainty as to why Jesus chose to heal this man in this way but make no mistake; this man is perfectly and totally healed and the troubling verse concerning apparent “fuzzy vision” is not a statement against the power of Jesus to completely heal. It was Jesus, who for His own reasons chose to do things this way with this man. It is possible that He was teaching His disciples a lot more than we may realize at first reading. Without being too technical, let’s dive a bit deeper into these verses. To start, there are three words used in the original Greek in **verse 24** alone that deal with vision. They are: **1.** *looked up*, Anablepo “to look up, to recover sight”; **2.** *see*, Blepo “to see, discern, to be possessed of sight, have the power of seeing”; and **3.** which is not found in the NKJV is Horao, “to see with the eyes”. This verse in the NASB helps us see the three original Greek words; the verse reads, “*And he looked up and said, ‘I see men, for I see them like trees, walking around’.*” Next, **verse 25** uses additional Greek words dealing with vision. One of these words, Apokathistemi in Greek means “to restore to its former state”. Another word is Telaugos and means “at a distance and clearly”. With all that said, the bottom line is that in the final analysis The Creator gives this man perfect vision; 20/20 is how we would describe it today, yet it exceeds that description; He gives Him vision restored like vision should be. And seeing as it is the Creator of vision that is working this miracle, it is absolutely perfect vision. He took this man from complete blindness to perfect vision. The questions that remains are; what about the “fuzzy vision” of **verse 24**? Why the two “stages” of healing? Eternity alone will give definitive answer and we can’t be dogmatic because the text is not but tomorrow we will look at one possibility. Today, let’s end remembering Jesus ALWAYS finishes His work (**John 17:4**). Read **Philippians 1:6** which tells us this fact and also offer us great promise that God will complete the work in us of total and final glorification (also see **Romans 8:28-30**).

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, help me trust You even when I may not fully understand everything You are doing. Thank You Jesus that You finished the work The Father gave You to do. It was work I couldn't do on my own. Please help me by faith to trust in You and Your Gospel work.*

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 8:24 - 26** “And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.” We left of yesterday with the questions raised in the seeming stages of this healing. To offer a possible reason let me start by again taking us to the original Greek text. In **verse 24** the original Greek tells us the man said, βλέπω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους “blepo ho anthropos”, “I see the men...” The blind man opens his eyes and sees *the men*. Remember we have noticed in this section of Mark that Jesus’ ministry is changing not merely in geography but also in the fact He is in high gear preparing and teaching His men as He approaches the cross. When the blind man mentions *the men*, he may very well be referring to the disciples who most likely were with Jesus as He separated and brought this man away from the crowds and the town for this healing. If this is fact, he must have heard the disciples and Jesus in conversation as they walked *him out of the town*. What an interesting conversation that may have been. Regardless, Jesus heals this man and shows a progression in his healing from fuzzy to clear. Perhaps Jesus is teaching His disciples that they are not instant “experts” in theology. No man sees ALL the depth of God’s truth at once. We should not suggest to men that immediately when they come to Jesus they become fully mature and fully grown followers of Jesus. This is in fact not the truth. Yes, we are instantly justified before God but we have just entered the door of sanctification in living. “Church membership” (Salvation) is the beginning not the end of the road. We don’t lie down and relax once someone professes Jesus rather the work has actually just begun. It is possible this truth is being illustrated by our Lord to His men who would evangelize and be about the work of leading the church as it is built by Christ through the power of The Holy Spirit. Finally, we read that Jesus *sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town*. We know that many others Jesus sent away to be discreet and quiet were not in fact obedient to Jesus. We happily do not read that this man failed to heed Jesus command. Why did Jesus command this? Again, countless suggestions are out there, many of which we have covered before such as not inciting further the passion of the people to attempt to make Jesus an earthly King by force. Perhaps Jesus merely sent this man home for his own good; giving him quiet time to reflect and meditate on his newly restored sight. Imagine this mans excitement! Maybe Christ sent him home like He did the demon possessed man in **Mark 5:19** to share this with his close family and friends and to corporately worship and glorify Jesus.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, Thank You for loving me, including me, and giving me such grace.*