

The context of Matthew 8 & 9 is a preview of the Kingdom of God. The ministry of Jesus in this time is relatively private. He has healed the leper (8:4), the servant boy at home (8:6), Peter's mother-in-law at Peter's house (8:14), others at evening (8:16), calmed the storm seen by those in the boat (8:26), a demon-possessed Gentile and Jesus was asked to leave (8:34), and a paralytic lowered through the roof (9:6, Luke 5:19). Jesus is healing and forgiving sins and being declared the Son of David (9:27), Son of Man (8:20, 9:6), and Son of God (8:29).

Who may have hope in the face of disability? Who may enter the Kingdom of Christ?

1. **Those who acknowledge their need for Christ:** A) Jews of the time believed that blindness was judgement from God, John 9:2, Gen. 19:11, Ex. 4:11, Deut. 28:28. B) A priest couldn't offer sacrifices to God on behalf of others if he was blind, Lev. 21:18. C) The blind and disabled are seen as outcasts.
 - a. Healing given by Jesus goes along with salvation of the soul. To be healed from blindness is salvation to those in Judaism. **We must deal with sin to enter the Kingdom.**
2. **Those who seek mercy from Christ:** V27, they cried, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" V26, news of Jesus is spreading throughout the region. The blind men had heard of Jesus as the Son of God and the Son of David who heals and forgives. Luke 4:43, Jesus' purpose was to proclaim the good news of the kingdom.
3. **Those who believe on Christ:** V27, they called Jesus the Son of David. In V28, they called Jesus Lord, a reference to His deity. They showed they understood 2 Sam. 7:12-17 that the King would come from David. They showed their belief in Jesus as the Christ.
 - a. V29, Healing and faith are again connected. Trust and belief in Christ is what the believer in Christ believes in their minds.
 - b. **To be saved from your disability you must be saved from your sin.** A kingdom citizen must be saved from their sin.

What about Spiritual Blindness?

- The blind men show salvation from man's perspective. They can see Jesus for who He is. They believe in His power to save from sin. Is. 9:1-2 & Matt. 4:16, say that Jesus is the great Light coming into the world. The people of God reflect Christ to the world, Matt. 5:14. Light has come from God and has shone out of the darkness, 2 Cor. 4:6. Jesus is the Light of men, John 1:4. We walk in Light and have fellowship with the Father having been cleansed from all sin, 1 John 1:7.
- The mute man shows the blindness of men from God's perspective, Matt. 9:32-33. The man didn't search for Jesus, he was brought to Jesus. The man couldn't declare or understand the mercies of God being one who was mute, and demon possessed.
- For the one who has heard the Gospel and has come to understand the means of salvation in Christ, that opportunity won't always be offered if they reject the offer of salvation and forgiveness of sins in Christ, Heb. 10:26, and go on sinning willfully. There no longer remains a sacrifice for sin, if they continue sinning willfully after hearing the truth.
- Christ has made us who were dead in our sins, alive in Christ, Eph. 2:1, 5. To show the riches of His grace for the ages to come, Eph. 2:7.
- The disabled must be born again to enter the kingdom of God.
- Ps. 103:1-5, salvation from sin will bring healing from disability in the kingdom of God.

Further Discussion and Application

What does Scripture show about man's state apart from salvation in Christ? Rom. 3:10-20 (Ps. 14) lays out the case against mankind by God. What is the response of the believer when the Light of Christ shines in their heart? What is the result for those who believe? What is the result for those who don't believe?

Being born again is a work of the Spirit of God according to John 3:8. What did the blind men demonstrate in their confession of Christ? What did they know about Christ? What are the attributes of Christ that believers believe and have come to know about Him?

Light and truth are synonymous in the Gospel of John and 1 John (as elsewhere in the Scriptures). What darkness has been exposed in your heart as a result of your salvation? Why is continuing in sin spiritual darkness? Why is it a blessing that the believer in Christ sees their sin and is able to repent of it? Why is the progressive and ongoing sanctification of the believer a demonstration of salvation?

Spiritual blindness comes with the inability to see sin. Paul calls it walking in the futility of the mind, Eph. 4:17-18. What is the responsibility of the believer according to Eph. 4:20-32? What is the fruit of those who have come to Christ? What happens to the speech of believers? What is the response towards those that ask for forgiveness from other believers? Why is humility the hallmark of a believer?