



caused Jesus to ask His disciples, “**Do you not yet SEE or UNDERSTAND?**” (Mark 8:17, Emphasis mine). When Jesus healed the blind man we are told that he “**began to SEE EVERYTHING CLEARLY**” (Mark 8:25, emphasis mine). In the same way, the disciples came to see clearly that Jesus is the Christ (Mark 8:29).

Unfortunately we do not have the privilege of being able to physically see Jesus Christ. The Lord told Thomas, “**Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed**” (John 20:29). We are expected to know Jesus. “**If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him**” (John 14:7).

The Hebrew author writes, “**We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.... He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God**” (Hebrews 10:9-12). Do you see clearly that Jesus is “**the way, and the truth, and the life**” (John 14:6)? Do you understand the significance of who He is? He is the only one with the power to forgive sins, and the only hope for mankind. Why can we not come to see clearly like the blind man?



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ISSUE

15.51

BULLETIN OF  
THE OLSEN  
PARK CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Faithful Sayings

December 22,  
2013

## Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM

10:20 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM



## Elders:

Pat Ledbetter  
Jeff Nunn  
Kyle Pope

## Deacons:

Dean Bowers  
Eddie Cook  
Steve Dixon  
Jack Langley  
Neil Ledbetter  
Brady McAlister  
Walker McAnear  
Lance Purcell  
Rusty Scott

## Evangelists:

Kyle Pope  
Andrew Dow

## I Can See Clearly Now (Mark 8:22-27)

By Andrew Dow

**M**iracles play an important role in the revelation of God’s word. These supernatural displays of power were performed so that the viewers (or, in our case, readers) would recognize that the one performing the miracle was from God and spoke with the authority of God. The gospel of John admits that “**many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which were not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God**” (John 20:30-31, NASU).

Although there is no set law dictating how a miracle is to be performed, a simple survey of the recorded miracles shows that the vast majority were instantaneous (Matthew 8:3; John 5:8-9). When Mark, therefore, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells of a miracle that seemed to take two tries, it causes many people to wonder why that is. Does this indicate that Jesus was not powerful enough to heal the man the first time? Or, is there some other reason

why Jesus performed such a miracle. Let's examine this miracle in its context to see why Jesus healed this blind man in two stages.

### The Two-Part Miracle

First, let's notice what Mark records of this story. Jesus, having just arrived at Bethsaida, has a blind man brought before Him to be healed. When He takes the blind man out of the city, He spits on his

eyes and lays His hands on him (Mark 8:23). It was not uncommon for these types of actions to accompany the miracles of Jesus (Mark 6:5; 7:33). While His outward actions were no different than other miracles, the initial result is unexpected.

The text says that Jesus **“asked him, ‘Do you see anything?’ And he looked up and said, ‘I see men, for I see them like trees, walking around’”** (Mark 8:23-24). How can this be? Was Jesus somehow incapable of healing this blind man? That can't be the best explanation. Notice what happens as the story continues, **“Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly”** (Mark 8:25).

Jesus made it so that the blind man saw **“everything clearly.”** That hardly sounds like a failed miracle attempt. Yet, why Jesus chose to heal him in stages may still puzzle us.

### The Context of the Miracle

In order to fully appreciate the miracle recorded in Mark 8:22-27, we must understand the context in which Mark placed the account. As the eighth chapter opens, Christ is being followed by a great multitude (Mark 8:1). It was not uncommon for Jesus to be followed by great crowds (Mark 1:28, 33; 2:2; 3:7-8, 20; 4:1; etc.). Who could blame the multitudes for following after a man who was legitimately healing people? Mark 8:1-10 tells of Jesus feeding a crowd of about 4,000 people with only seven loaves of bread. This miracle was a clear demonstration of Christ's great power!

Immediately following this display of power, Mark records what must have been a frustrating sequence of events. First, a group of Pharisees **“came out and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven to test Him”** (Mark 8:11). Had our Lord not just provided a sign? Second, after Jesus and His apostles get on a boat, the twelve **“began to discuss with one another the fact that they had no bread”** (Mark 8:16). Please remember that this is mere moments after Jesus fed 4,000 people with 7 loaves of bread. To this expression of disbelief Jesus said, **“Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand?”** (Mark 8:17-21). It was following these events that **“they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored Him to touch him”** (Mark 8:22).

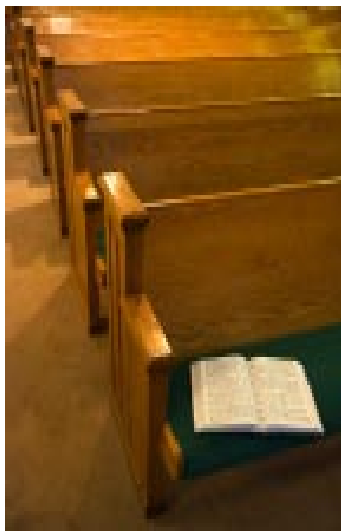
Look now at what follows Jesus' two-step miracle. Mark records a conversation between Jesus and His disciples. The text tells us that Jesus **“questioned His disciples, saying to them, ‘Who do people say that I am?’”** (Mark 8:27). The disciples threw out a number of answers ranging from Elijah to John the Baptist. Finally Jesus asks, **“But who do you say that I am?”** (Mark 8:29a). Peter boldly replied, **“You are the Christ”** (Mark 8:29b).

These disciples who once, after seeing His power to feed a multitude, doubted that Jesus could feed them, now see clearly who He is. At this point things changed. Christ began

**“to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things... and be killed, and after three days rise again”** (Mark 8:31). Now Jesus **“was stating the matter plainly”** (Mark 8:32). It would not be long before Jesus would be transfigured and His mission would become clearer still (Mark 9:2-8).

### Do You See Clearly?

While at first it seems Jesus was incapable of healing a blind man on the first try, when we read the story in context it becomes evident that Jesus was demonstrating the progression His disciples would follow. At first, like the blind man, they could only see a vague impression of reality. They followed Jesus daily and heard Him teach, but they were not fully aware of who He was. This



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