

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, June 29th, 2025
Rev. Gerry Gallant

Walk of Faith
Proper
John 9:1-16

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

In your wisdom, O God, you call us here to worship you.

We gather, alive to the Word of God.

You call us to be fully alive with your life abundant,
ready to listen and respond with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

We listen, alive to the Word of God.

You call us to be always watchful for your Word of wisdom,
sometimes startling and unexpected,
sometimes still and quiet,
but always dwelling among us.

We watch and wait for the Word of God.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

We give thanks to you, God our Father,
for mercy that reaches out,
for patience that waits our returning,
for your love that is ever ready
to welcome sinners.

We praise you that in Jesus Christ
you came to us with forgiveness,
and that, by your Holy Spirit,
you move us to repent
and receive your love.

Though we are sinners,
you are faithful and worthy of all praise.

O gracious and holy God,
give us diligence to seek you,
wisdom to perceive you,
and patience to wait for you.

Grant us, O God,

a mind to meditate on you,
 eyes to behold you,
 ears to listen for your Word,
 a heart to love you,
 and a life to proclaim you,
 through the power of the Spirit
 of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Children's Hymn: "Jesus Loves Me"

Call to Confession

The proof of God's amazing love is this:
 While we were sinners, Christ died for us.
 Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness,
 so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
 Trusting in God's faithfulness and compassion,
 let us confess our sin before God and one another

Prayer of Confession

**Holy and merciful God,
 in your presence we confess
 our sinfulness, our shortcomings,
 and our offenses against you.
 You alone know how often we have sinned
 in wandering from your ways,
 in wasting your gifts,
 in forgetting your love.
 Have mercy on us, O Lord,
 for we are ashamed and sorry
 for all we have done to displease you.
 Forgive our sins,
 and help us to live in your light
 and walk in your ways,
 for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

**Our God pardons our sins and forgives our disobedience.
 Our God does not stay angry forever.
 Instead, our God delights to show mercy.
 Our God again has compassion on us.
 Our God tramples our sins underfoot**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name
 Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 Give us this day our daily bread
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one
 For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
 Forever and ever, Amen.

Hymn: "What Grace is Mine"

What grace is mine that He who dwells in endless light
 Called through the night to find my distant soul
 And from His scars poured mercy that would plead for me
 That I might live and in His name be known.

Chorus

So I will go wherever He is calling me.
 I lose my life to find my life in Him.
 I give my all to gain the hope that never dies
 I bow my heart take up my cross and follow Him.

What grace is mine to know His breath alive in me.
 Beneath His wings my wakened soul may soar.
 All fear can flee for death's dark night is overcome.
 My Savior lives and reigns for evermore. (Chorus)

Responsive Reading

Psalm 81:1-10

1 Sing aloud to God our strength;
 shout for joy to the God of Jacob!

**2 Raise a song; sound the tambourine,
 the sweet lyre with the harp.**

3 Blow the trumpet at the new moon,
 at the full moon, on our feast day.

**4 For it is a statute for Israel,
 a rule of the God of Jacob.**

5 He made it a decree in Joseph
 when he went out over the land of Egypt.
 I hear a language I had not known:

6 "I relieved your shoulder of the burden;

your hands were freed from the basket.

7 In distress you called, and I delivered you;
I answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah

**8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!**

9 There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.

**10 I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.**

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

John 9:1-16

9 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰ So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." ¹² They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

Sermon

Did you know that the Bible has no chapters and verses? The original Biblical texts were written as scrolls, with no chapter headings or verse numbers. In fact, it was not until the thirteenth century that chapters were introduced into the Bible, and verse numbers came a few centuries later in the 16th century.

You might be asking yourself, why do I need to know that? Well last week I talked about the importance of studying your Bible, not just reading it but chewing on the Word!

Look at how today's Scripture in a new chapter starts, '**As he passed by.**'

As he passed by, where? As he passed by, how? As he passed by, what? As he passed by, when? Luckily, it tells us the who.

There are so many questions we can ask about just these few words, yet we all skip past them because they are at the start of a new chapter, and we want to move onto the more important details.

However, in doing so we often miss something.

Look at the end of Chapter 8

John 8:59

⁵⁹ So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple

When you remember that the Bible had no chapters, you can find the answer to these simple questions that helps to set the scene for the miracle that we will see take place in the Scriptures we study today.

Jesus has just finished his confrontation with the religious leaders, saying that t their father is the devil. Claiming yet again to be the Son of God and God the Son, by using that powerful phrase, 'I am'

The religious leaders all scrambled to pick up stones to kill Jesus and he simple walked away, however he did not go into hiding, or even make it very far out of the temple before he sees this blind man we are introduced to today.

Jesus's life was at risk, he had angered the religious authorities, yet he sees this man in need and immediately has compassion for him.

This is the loving, giving mercy of Jesus Christ. This is the way that we are all called to be, even when the world is after us, even when we are tired, even when we feel persecuted and threatened, we are to look out on the world with love, mercy and compassion, the same way our Savior did.

While Jesus looks upon the blind man with love, grace, mercy and compassion, The disciples see him in another way.

John 9:2

² And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

They see a theological debate. They saw a man blind from birth, and their minds immediately went, “I wonder what sin caused this man to be blind, whether it as one of his own, or his parents’ sins that he is being punished for?”

What a difference between Jesus Christ and the disciples.

Jesus’s response is not what the disciples are expecting.

Firstly, He is going to point them away from the big theological debate, he is going to move them past simple talking about the issue, to doing something about it. Jesus is going to do something, to help the blind man in need, because he can.

How much better off would our world be if we just acted more like Jesus Christ. Instead of getting caught up in debates and meetings and planning and organization and all the other distracting elements of worldly structures. What if when we saw someone in need, we just did what we could and encouraged others to do the same.

What if we focused on bring the Word of God to people, instead of being worried about the organization structures of denominations and churches? What if walking with Christ was the priority, instead of getting caught up in debates about whether a baptism should be a sprinkle or a dunk, or who should eat the Communion bread and who should now, and what color the carpet in the sanctuary should be?

What if we just gave up all of those things and simple did what we could to focus on bringing the Word of God, the Bread of Life, the Living Water and the Light of the World to those who are starving, thirsty and in the dark without needing a million meetings and approvals just to do so.

Secondly, he is going to address a common misconception that existed in Jewish culture of that time, and one that is still very prevalent in society today. This idea that sin and disease or misfortune are ALWAYS directly related to one another. For some reason we all seem to think that suffering is always related to sin that is in our life.

The disciples are asking a big question, the equivalent of, 'Why do bad things happen in the world?' or 'Why do people need to suffer?'

And yes, these are serious questions that we need to reflect upon.

I want to remind you of something; you came into this world causing pain. Ask your mom, childbearing and childbirth are not pain free experiences.

We come into the world causing pain and the first thing most of us experience is pain. We start out life in this world with a scream with a cry as we expel the mucus and fluid from our lungs so we can breathe.

To be human is to know pain, is to know suffering. Every human being on this planet has a story of hardship, of pain, and of suffering.

And because of this all people, both Christian and non-Christian will often stop at some point and ask, 'Why? Why am I going through this?'

Look how Jesus answers this question.

John 9:3-5

³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Jesus says it was not this man or this man's parents that caused this man to be blind. There is not always a direct relationship between sin in someone's life and suffering.

Now, before we get too far along it is possible for the sins of the parents to affect the life of a child. Look at children who are born addicted, or with fetal alcohol syndrome, or even blind because of a STD that the parent had.

So, the disciple's question was not absurd, Jesus is telling them that in this case however, it is not the sin of this man or the sin of his parents that caused his blindness.

And truthfully the number of children directly suffering because of the sins of their parents is probably quite small.

The majority of birth defects, tragedies, disease, and suffering we have in this world are due to the simple fact that we live in a fallen world, one in which death and chaos entered when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden.

The original sin, set the principles of death and suffering in this world, and mankind has had to deal with it ever since.

However, do not despair, do not look around at the suffering around you and give up hope, because we live in a fallen world that is on its way to being a redeemed world. God is at work, redeeming people through the Holy Spirit, until the events of the book of Revelation take place and we begin our new lives in God's kingdom.

Now there will be many people who will say that God should have never let the world fall to begin with. We should have stayed perfect and never had sin, death, chaos, suffering and destruction. That would have been ideal, a utopia.

However, that opinion does not really matter, because God is the one in control not us, He knows more than we do, and we need to be willing to bow our knee to him and humble ourselves. We must accept that God knows more than we do and for some reason he let the world fall, so that he could create the perfect redeemed world for those who are adopted into his eternal family.

We can see God at work redeeming the world in the here and now. We see people miraculously healed, we see people saved here and now and we can know that when we all reach the Kingdom of Heaven will be in perfect eternal bodies, bodies that have been completely healed and are free of all birth defects, disease, and ailments that exist in this fallen world.

God is doing great things in the world today, we see it in big miracles and chance encounters, but if we are willing to look closely - again and again in our lives there is evidence of God at work in this world.

The truth is that if you want to see an unfallen world the only way to see it is through God, through acceptance and obedience to Jesus Christ.

So, Jesus begins by telling the disciple's and us that suffering is not always directly related to a sin in your life. I will say that again, 'Suffering is not always directly related to sin in your life!'

Then he says this, **'but that the works of God might be displayed in him.'**

Jesus tells them that the man's blindness was in God's plan, so that the works of God could be revealed.

Imagine how hard it was for that man as a boy to try to figure out why he was blind. Imagine how many times he asks his parents why he was blind. How many late nights he spent wondering what had caused his blindness.

And Jesus says stop thinking about the why and know that God can do something about it.

God does his works in people's life in many different ways. In this case, spoiler alert, he is going to heal the man's blindness. In some cause God might leave them blind but give them a joy and happiness and faith that fills their lives.

Is one any better than the other? Are you going to be the one who judges how God works in people's lives? There are plenty of people who express the work of God through the suffering in their lives.

Just look at Joni Erikson Tada, Bethany Hamilton, Aaron Fotheringham or Nick Vujicic.

Nick Vujicic was born without arms and legs because of tetra-amelia syndrome. According to his biography, his mother refused to even hold him after his birth. He was bullied his entire school life, he attempted suicide, his life was full of suffering.

And he was saved by Jesus Christ, and he is an evangelist and a public speaker.

God was at work in his life, and God's glory is evident in his works.

There are many people who honor and glory God through the pain and suffering that they have in their lives.

God can do his amazing work by granting perseverance, strength, and joy through their suffering or he can show it by delivering someone from their suffering.

Which is why Jesus say that there is work for him to do.

John 9:6

⁶ Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud

Jesus heals the man by spitting on the ground and kneads the mud into a clay and puts on the man's eyes.

It might seem strange but there was a belief that the spittle of a powerful person might have a healing power. However, we have to admit it was strange.

We have to ask ourselves, 'Jesus why are you doing this?'

Jesus could be pointing back to the truth that he is the creator of the world. Man was created by using the dust of the earth and Jesus could be showing that in the same way he created man he can recreated man.

It is however much more likely that Jesus is doing this with the intent of not creating a pattern in the way that he works his acts of healing in this world.

Sometimes he healed from a distance with a word, sometimes he laid hands on them, sometimes he rebuked the disease, and it left the person, sometimes he told simply to stand.

Could you imagine if Jesus had always healed people by spitting? We would have hundreds of people in the world today going around and spitting the healing of God on others because they thought that was the only way that God worked.

The principle in this is easy, God works differently in different lives!

Could you imagine if all the people Jesus healed got together and tried to figure out how he healed them.

One says He has to touch you, another says He has to command you, another says He needs to simply speak a word, another cast out a demon and then this guy shows up and tells the rest they all have it wrong, He needs to spit on you!

They are all right, God worked differently in all their lives.

The same way God works differently today in all your lives. However, his goal is the same! His goal is to make you a disciple of Jesus Christ, to make you a little bit more like Jesus each and every day you live. He might do it in many different ways, he might do it faster in some people's lives and slower in others. He might have a mighty presence in one person's story and subtle presence in another's. However, the goal is the same, walk with Christ a little closer each day.

We need to know and accept that God knows what is best and that the work he is doing in our lives and the lives of those around us is best, and it is according to his plans, even when it does not align with ours.

John 9:7

⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

Jesus probably did not have to tell the blind man to wash his eyes, I am sure he would have done that anyways.

However, what Jesus did was tell him to go to a specific place to go and wash. Depending in which temple entrance he was at, the man had to walk at least a few hundred meters to get to the pool of Siloam.

So, the man walked there, downstairs, through crowds, until he reached the pool of Siloam where he washed out his eyes. He had to walk there in faith, past all the other places where he

could have rinsed the spit and mud off his face, he had to walk there in faith, because Jesus had told him to do so.

Even though Jesus had done the work, the blind man had to respond in faith.

I wonder how many of us have seen the work of God in our lives, yet we are still refusing to respond in faith. How many of us are holding onto the ways of this world, our own personal pleasures, and sins, rather than obeying Jesus Christ and walking to that pool Siloam so that we can have our sight restored.

The blind man walked to the pool of Siloam in faith and washed his eyes, and when he opened them, it was a whole new world. A world filled with shapes and colors, a world where he could see the faces of those around him, the steps that he had just struggled down blindly he could walk up easily.

It was a whole new world, and it was the same old world. To him everything was new, however, we know nothing in the world had changed, what had changed was him!

He was blind and now he could see. He had changed; he was a completely different man because the Light of the World had come into his life.

John 9:8-9

⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."

The people look at the blind man and are confused. The man that they knew as the blind man could no longer be the blind man, because he can see. Even though he looked just like the blind man, dressed just like the blind man, and had walked past them just moments before as the blind man. They could not understand the transforming power of Jesus Christ that had occurred in the life of the blind man.

Even the man says, **"I am the man."**

This is a fact still today. Sometimes it is hard for people to recognize the transforming power of God in our lives. Sometimes it is hard for them to accept that God can change us. Sometimes they struggle understanding that God works in our lives in different ways and at different rates. And as we walk with Christ, they will see the changes in you as you are transformed by the Holy Spirit, don't try to convince them you are changed, show them you are changed by the way you live your life.

John 9:10-12

¹⁰So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

Isn't it amazing? This man knew almost nothing about Jesus. He knew that there was a man named Jesus, who did something to him, told him to do something and he trusted and obeyed Him. He went to the pool of Siloam and washed his eyes and suddenly he was a changed man.

Out of such a small beginning, out of the smallest step in faith, the man was saved.

This is how faith starts for many, you do not need to know all the doctrines of the church, you do not need to understand the entire Bible.

You just need to know a man named Jesus, did something to you, his Word is telling you to do something, and you are going to trust and obey him. It is that simple, Salvation is yours and as you continue to walk with Jesus step by step in your life you will learn more and more about who He is and what he can do in your life.

John 9:1-16

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, once again breaking the rules of the religious leaders. Remember he has already defeated them once in a debate about healing on the Sabbath, the day he told the man to stand and pick up his mat.

Yet once again they are going to be angered that he has done work on the Sabbath. Can you guess the work he is guilty of performing? Kneading. (K N E A D I N G) he took that little bit of spit and that little bit of dirt and rubbed them together to make mud and that kneading was a violation of the Sabbath rules that the religious leaders had imposed upon the Jewish people.

The blind man told the religious leaders that he could see, his whole life had changed, a man who had been born blind, lived his entire life blind had been healed, and the religious leaders looked right past that to the fact that Jesus had rubbed some spit and dirt between his fingers breaking the laws of the Sabbath.

They were completely focused on their own man-made rules and regulations. They missed seeing the work of God in their world, in their lives, because they were so focused on persecuting Jesus Christ as a Sabbath breaker.

John 9:16

¹⁶ **Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them.**

And Jesus divides, two camps, the camp that rejects Jesus as the Messiah because he is a Sabbath breaker, and the camp that says maybe we have a wrong understanding of what the Sabbath is about.

The truth is that there was a lot more evidence that he was the Son of God; his healings, his teachings, his feeding of the five thousand.

However, those who saw him as a Sabbath breaker, only saw him as a Sabbath breaker. They rejected all the evidence of him being the Messiah, they refused to accept that they could be wrong about the Sabbath, they refused to look past their own pride and understanding of the Scripture, they rejected Jesus Christ, because to accept him meant that they had to change.

When someone wants to reject Jesus Christ, any excuse will do. They had no logical, rational reason to reject him, yet they did. If someone wants to reject Jesus, they will find any reason to do so.

And at the end of times when the Day of Judgement comes, those are the two camps that will exist, those who rejected Jesus Christ using whatever excuse they could come up with.

And those who humbled themselves, who surrender themselves and their lives to God, those who quit making excuses, those who had Jesus do something to them, those who listened to the Word of God and faithfully obeyed, even when it called for them to change, those who had their eyes opened and are reborn as they begin their walk as the Salt and Light of God’s Word in this dark and broken world.

Let us pray,

Watch Over All Your People

Gracious God and Father,
 watch over all your people,
 those who struggle with doubts,
 those who struggle with the labors of life,
 those who sometimes struggle as they seek you.
 Calm our hearts with your Word,
 and with your dear Son’s promise,
 “I will give you rest.”
 Pour out your abundant blessings on us,
 give us the assurance of your love in Jesus Christ.

Give us confidence as we face the challenges ahead.
 Give us health of body and spirit,
 and blessings in all things;
 through your Son who gave himself for us
 so that we could be his,
 Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Source: Paul C. Stratman

Hymn #592: “I, The Lord of Sea and Sky”

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
 I have heard my people cry.
 All who dwell in dark and sin
 my hand will save.
 I, who made the stars of night,
 I will make their darkness bright.
 Who will bear my light to them?
 Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
 I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
 I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
 I have borne my people's pain.
 I have wept for love of them.
 They turn away.
 I will break their hearts of stone,
 give them hearts for love alone.
 I will speak my words to them.
 Whom shall I send? (Chorus)

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
 I will send the poor and lame.
 I will set a feast for them.
 My hand will save.
 Finest bread I will provide
 till their hearts be satisfied.
 I will give my life to them.
 Whom shall I send? (Chorus)

Invitation to Offering

Offering Prayer

Closing Hymn #299: “Holy, Holy, Holy”

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
 Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
 Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
 God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore thee,
 Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.
 Cherubim and seraphim, falling down before thee,
 Who was and is and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
 All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth, and sky, and sea;
 Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
 God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

Pastoral Prayer

Lord, our God,
 whose glory is beyond compare;
 whose mercy is boundless, and love for us is endless;
 look upon us now in your compassion.

We pray for peace that calms our hearts and saves our souls,
 and for peace in the whole world and throughout creation,

We pray for the stability of the church and the unity of this congregation,
 for the ministries of your church around the world in these challenging times,

We pray for our country, our leaders, and all those in public service
 for this community, and for every neighborhood and nation,
 and for all who offer themselves in service for the common good,

We pray for the whole of God’s creation in its beauty and bounty,
 for the wellbeing of every creature and their habitats,

We pray for the sick, the suffering, and the isolated,
 for victims of violence, refugees, and captives,
 and for our protection against all affliction, danger, and distress,

We pray all this to you, Holy God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
To whom belongs all glory, honor, and worship,
now and forever, and to the ages of ages.
Amen.

Benediction

As you leave this place this day,
may God's love sustain you,
and may you love those who surround you.
May God's Spirit empower you,
and may you empower all those you meet.
May God's joy fill your hearts,
and may this joy overflow
to the ends of the earth for God's glory,
now and forever. **Amen.**