

## UNDENIABLY THE CHRIST

**SCRIPTURE** Matthew 9:27–31: And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, “Have mercy on us, Son of David.”<sup>28</sup> When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.”<sup>29</sup> Then he touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith be it done to you.”<sup>30</sup> And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, “See that no one knows about it.”

**SYNOPSIS** Jesus is undeniably the Christ—the long-awaited, promised Messiah, the unique God-man come to redeem. He has come as the glory of a new dawn upon this darkened world dominated by sin’s suffering and satanic influence, to save us. We have witnessed His authority and power over creation and corruption. We have witnessed Him as God touching humanity with deepest compassion. Now, in this passage, we see Him as the promised light come into the world to give sight to the blind and cast out darkness. It is crowning and climactic. In the progress of Jesus’ self-revelation, this passage uniquely and undeniably testifies to Him as the Christ. It also begins to unlock the riddle seen in His rejection. The irony, again, is rich and profoundly symbolic. Here blind men see more than scholars. The crescendo is sounded. The Christ is revealed. How will those who see and hear respond?

### APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. **THE PUNCTUATION** — What is the significance of ending the list of miracles with these two? Since a girl was raised from the dead in Matthew 9:18-26, some have suggested these last two miracles in 9:27-34 are anti-climactic. Why is this record of Christ’s works punctuated like this? What are we supposed to see in them?
  - a. When reading the Bible, we tend to look for ourselves rather than Christ. How does reading the Bible like this, with a focus on us, cause a passage such as this to be anti-climactic? What must the focus of the passage be, to be the climactic pinnacle it was meant to be?

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- b. Are you more concerned about how the narrative relates to you than what it reveals to you? What do you seek in reading the Scripture, some benefit or God Himself? Do you see Christ Himself (not merely what He does for you) as your greatest gain? Is receiving blessing from God more important to you than giving praise to God?

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE

- c. How do your answers for the above relate to finding help in a time of need? How does applying the principle of this punctuation affect your approach to reading the Bible? What practical application can you draw from such a punctuation? Read and discuss how the following passages relate to the principle of such a punctuation: Psalm 2:12; 34:8, 22; 65:5; Jeremiah 17:7 (in contrast to 17:9); Psalm 32:10; 33:21; 37:5; Isaiah 26:3; Proverbs 3:5-6; 16:20; Nahum 1:7; Hebrews 4:16.

2. **THE POINTERS** — The miracles recorded here present precise signs that undeniably testify to Jesus as the Christ. Blindness in Jesus' time: The blind were social outcasts, treated as unclean, seen as judged by God, not accepted. The blind men come crying out very loudly, alarmingly, determined about something, but they say, "Have mercy on us!" Jesus told the Pharisees who were complaining about Jesus saving sinners, "Go and learn what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (9:13). Mercy has to do with sin and guilt, being a plea for relief from what is deserved. As such, it is the cry for what we do not deserve, namely forgiveness, reconciliation, restoration, healing, etc. Mercy says, "I have no hope but in you O God!"
- a. Did the blind men come crying about unfairness? Did they have a victim mentality, one so prevalent in our day? Do we come like they did, empty handed to God and beseech Him for mercy, or do we get mad at God, or turn from Him thinking we are not getting what we deserve in fairness? Would you rather run to fairness or God's mercy? If God was fair, what would be our plight?

- b. What title do the blind men ascribe to Jesus? What do the blind men—who were not in synagogue, nor able to see and read the Scriptures, nor able to actually see the miracles taking place—see that others didn't or couldn't? See 2 Samuel 7:12-14 for the foundation. See Matthew 21:9, 15-16, Matt 22:41-45 and discuss the relationship between Christ and "Son of David."

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

- c. See Matthew 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:15. Who in addition to the two blind men in our story understood who Jesus was? Who didn't see it? Why didn't they? Do you? What is being unfolded by the insight from those most unsuspected? See 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

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- d. See Exodus 4:11; Psalm 146:8; Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 42:6. No one before or after Jesus is recorded as having given sight to the blind except Him. In verse 30, sight is "born." Compare with 2 Corinthians 4:4, 6. What is the relationship between sight and salvation? What is the symbolic significance that reveals more in this miracle than the raising of the dead in the previous? Who is Jesus? How does this now come as a crescendo in the escalating revelation of Jesus and who He truly is? How does this affect you? Does it?

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- e. In the story of the little boy who was blind and whose mother took him outside once he had regained his sight, he asked, "Why didn't you ever tell me it was so beautiful?" She replied, "You can't truly understand how beautiful it is until you have seen it for yourself!" Have you seen Jesus for yourself? Who He truly is? Beautiful? Majestic? Merciful? God? Do you see like the blind men saw?

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3. **THE CHRIST AND THE CROSS** — Discuss the glory of the cross in terms of Christ's identity versus His benefits. We must understand and believe/trust who He is before we can understand and appreciate what He's done. The quality of what has been accomplished is first due to the identity, person and nature of Him who accomplished it. How does the glory of the cross relate to the glory of the Christ? Who was crucified? Who was/is He? Could just any man have been crucified for us? With the same resulting benefits? What is greater to you personally, the glory of Christ or His benefits? Don't answer too quickly. Be real with yourself and God.

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE

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