

ACCORDING TO YOUR FAITH

Two blind men cried out to Jesus for healing. Jesus asked them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They responded, “Yes, Lord.”

Matthew 9:29 (NKJV)

29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.”

Jesus did not always require faith to heal people. Certainly, when He raised the dead, those people had no faith. But in this case Jesus did base His healing on their faith, saying, “**According to your faith let it be to you.**”

In terms of spiritual application, people see in connection with their faith. Theologically we might ask: Do people see and believe, or do they believe and see? This is the age-old issue regarding the mystery tension between sovereignty and responsibility. Apart from God, no one ever sees the truth on their own.

There is what I like to call “the light of conviction” for which people are accountable to respond. We see this early in the Bible in Genesis 4:7 as God reasons with Cain about the issue of sin, which was lying at the door of his heart. We see it in Isaiah 1:18 as God says, “Come now, let us reason together says the LORD, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow”.

2 Peter 2:20–21 (NKJV)

20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

Hebrews 10:26 (NKJV)

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

People are accountable for the light that is given and ultimately by the grace of God those who come to believe do so because they have responded to the light of the gospel.

So do people believe to see, or do they see to believe? In a qualified sense both are true. We see what God shows us. As Romans 1:19 says, ***“what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.”*** God in conviction shines the light of truth, but if people reject it they remain in darkness and are accountable for their rejection.

John 3:18–19 (NKJV)

18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Jesus asked the blind men if they believed and they said, ***“Yes, Lord”***. Jesus then touched their eyes saying, ***“According to your faith let it be to you.”***

A word about faith. In the Bible faith always has an object – namely the Lord Himself and His Word. Faith in faith is no faith at all. It doesn't matter what you believe if it is just random stuff it is attached to nothing and counts for nothing. When Jesus said, ***“Do you believe that I AM able...”*** the focus is on “I am able” – meaning Jesus is able. The whole issue surrounds WHO He is as the “Son of David”, WHO He is as “Lord”. It was their faith in WHO Jesus is as the divine Messiah that was honored.

It was not just a matter of believing they could be healed, but rather believing that Jesus as LORD had the authority to heal them. The issue was FAITH in Jesus for WHO He is. This is always the issue. Faith always has as its object God and His Word. Faith in faith is empty faith. Faith must be in the Lord and in His Word!

Matthew 9:30 (NKJV)

30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, ***“See that no one knows it.”***

Immediately their eyes were opened only to hear Jesus sternly warn them, ***“See that no one knows it.”*** This is a most interesting command. How could these formerly blind men keep their healing a secret? They couldn't lie about it – not ethically.

There is a pattern in Christ's ministry at this point. In chapter 8 He healed a leper and then said, ***“See that you tell no one”*** (Mt. 8:4). After Jesus raised the 12-year-old girl from the dead, as seen in Mt. 9:24, the parallel

passage of Mark 5:43 says that Jesus, “***commanded them strictly that no one should know it***”. And now, here upon healing these 2 blind men in the somewhat privacy of the house, He sternly warned them, “***See that no one knows it.***”

Why this emphasis on don't tell? There may be a couple of things in view here. Again, this is the first time the term “***Son of David***” is used in public reference to Jesus, and at this time that was a Messianic term charged with political connotations. There was a lot of Messianic fever, and the thought was the Messiah would politically take over and throw off the burden of Roman oppression. Recall in John 6 when the people so liked the free food that they were seeking by force to make Jesus their king, and so He departed (cf. Jn. 6:15).

Jesus did not want the general populace to get the wrong idea about Him being the Messiah. Oh, He was the Messiah, but they needed to see Him for WHO He truly was and not according to their preconceived ideas about what they thought the Messiah should be or do. It seems Jesus did not want a wrongful Messianic enthusiasm to overwhelm His ministry.

The other thing is Jesus did not want the attention to be on the sensationalism of the miracle. People love the idea of miracles. They can kind of go miracle crazy – especially when real miracles are happening. But that is to miss the point. The miracles that Christ did were really all about pointing to Him. **He is the point of the miracles – not the miracles in and of themselves.**

We have an entire movement in Christianity that is absorbed with supposed miracles and healings – even though so much of it is based on falsehood. Imagine, the out-of-control enthusiasm if real miracles were happening? Now of course the miracles were wonderful – but again they were not an end in themselves – the intention is that they point to Christ.

The attention is to be on Jesus and WHO He is – not merely on the miracles. There is this weird phenomenon where people get more wrapped up in the gift than the giver. The focus must always be on the giver of the gift. The focus must always be on the LORD Himself. That is the point.

Matthew 9:31 (NKJV)

31 But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.

But is a contrast word. In contrast to what Jesus said, they went out and spread the news about Jesus throughout the whole region. So much for obedience.

Some have tried to give them the benefit of the doubt, saying perhaps they didn't really talk about the healing, only about their newfound belief that Jesus was the Messiah. But it is pretty hard to separate WHO He is from what He did – which was the point as we saw earlier. The plain sense would seem to be they disobeyed and went and told everyone – which probably made the mission of Christ all the harder, as it only fed a wrongful Messianic fever that was misguided.