

**Title:** Keeping Your Eyes On Jesus

**Theme:** If we are to follow Jesus, we need to keep our eyes on him.

**Object:** Ball or Globe Ball


**Scripture:** [But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"](#) (Matthew 14:30 NASB)

How many games can you think of that use a ball? **-S-** Let's see-there's soccer, basketball, baseball, dodge ball, volleyball, cricket, rugby, golf, tennis, table tennis (ping pong), and stick ball to name a few. **-S-** Look at what these children are doing. **-S-** You can even just play a game of catch by throwing the ball back and forth with a playmate. Do you know what is the most important thing to remember when playing any game that uses a ball? You have to keep your eye on the ball. If you don't keep your eye on the ball, you will spend all of your time chasing it, or worse, you might wind up with a black eye!


In our Bible lesson today, Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, learned a lesson about the importance of keeping his eye on the ball. Well, actually, he learned about the importance of keeping his eyes upon Jesus!

Jesus and his disciples had had a long, hard day. **-S-** Jesus had been teaching a huge crowd of people and healing the sick. His disciples had just finished passing out food to a crowd of more than 5,000 men, women, and children. They were very tired. Jesus told the disciples to get in their boat and go to the other side of Lake Galilee. He sent the crowds away and went to a quiet place to be alone and pray.

Later in the night, the boat was quite a distance from the shore when the wind

came up and the water became rough with waves.  Jesus went out toward the boat walking on the water. When the disciples saw him they were afraid.

"It's a ghost," they cried. Jesus answered, "Don't be afraid, take courage, it's me!" Peter called out to him, "Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," said Jesus.

So, Peter climbed out of the boat and started walking on the water toward Jesus. But when he started looking around and saw the waves being blown about by the wind. He was afraid and he began to sink. "Lord, save me!" he cried.  Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter. "Why did you doubt?" Jesus asked.

Why do you think Peter began to sink? That's right, he began to look around at the mess he was in and took his eyes off of Jesus. As long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, he was fine, but when he took his eyes off of Jesus, he began to sink. You and I may encounter some pretty rough times in our life. As long as we keep our eyes upon Jesus and put our trust in him, we will be okay. But when we take our eyes off of Jesus and put our confidence in our own ability, we will surely sink!

Dear Lord Jesus, when the storms of life come against us, help us to remember to keep our eyes on you and keep our faith and trust in you. In your name we pray. Amen.

## PRAYER

**-S-** The result of the ‘Fall’ is that sickness is the norm and righteousness only comes about by the grace of God. Because of the ‘Fall’ death, disease, decay and darkness exist in this corrupt world. Chapter nine speaks of the coming of the Light into the world to overcome darkness. **-S-** However for the fallen world often the hardest truth to see is what is before their eyes. It is like when Joyce tells me to get something out of the pantry and I look and look but cannot find it. She comes over and picks it up from the shelf where it sat in plain sight right in front of me. Jesus now tells those who will hear, **-S-** “While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.” Just as the man blind from birth eyes did not perceive any light, so it is that people are blind and do not perceive Jesus the **-S-** “Light of World.”

Quickly reviewing the structure of the Gospel According to John **-S-** the first four chapters focus on Jesus as the Light that has come into the world that mankind might be reconciled back to God. **-S-** In the next four chapters we see Jesus coming to claim those who God has called. **-S-** Now, chapters 9 to 12 address all of those who receive Christ. Chapter 9 begins to focus on Jesus calling people out of this world to be His in spite of the growing hostility from the Jewish leadership. Jesus is rejected by the chosen people of God, the Jewish nation, that had drifted away from God, but a new people or new nation is now being created – the spiritual children of Abraham - those who believe in Jesus as the Messiah or Christ.

Have you ever hiked in the woods and turned over a rotten piece of log and under it you see all sorts of insects? As soon as the log is turned over and light hits the

insects they scurry to hide. **-S-** This is what we saw in chapter eight the creatures of darkness scurry to get away from Jesus the “Light of the World.” **-S-** Now in chapter nine the “Light” begins to shine into the souls of people and they are called forth. The first story of this new people of God through Jesus is found in the first twelve verses of chapter nine. Chapter nine is the story of the sovereign and electing grace of God in the salvation of mankind.

A. W. Pink wrote about the movement from chapters 5 to 8 and differences between chapters 8 and 9 so well I want to quote him. **-S-** “In John 8 we behold Christ as ‘the light’ exposing the darkness, but in John 9 He communicates sight. In John 8 the Light is despised and rejected, in John 9 He is received and worshipped. In John 8 the Jews are seen stooping down – to pick up stones; in John 9 Christ is seen stooping down – to make anointing clay. In John 8 Christ hides Himself from the Jews, in John 9 He reveals Himself to the blind beggar. **-S-** In John 8 we have a company in whom the Word has no place; in John 9 is one who responds promptly to the Word. In John 8 Christ, inside the Temple, is called demoniac; in John 9, outside the Temple, He is owned as Lord. The central truth of John 8 is the Light testing human responsibility; in John 9 the central truth is God acting in sovereign grace after human responsibility has failed.”

As we begin to delve into the first twelve verses of chapter 9 we can keep in mind that when Jesus heals, that there are at least 6 major traits seen in all the gospel accounts. As I go through these 6 traits you can compare them to those who today say that God has given them special powers to do the same.

- **-S-** Jesus healed with only a word or touch. Jesus does not have to be with the person to heal them.

- **-S-** Jesus healed instantly. Unlike some of the self-proclaimed healers of today who when someone is not instantly healed they claim the healing will be progressive. With Jesus who healed instantly there was no question that it was a miracle.
- **-S-** Jesus healed completely. An example is found in **-S-** Luke 4:39 where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law and "she immediately got up and waited on them." We will see this instant and complete healing in our story this morning as well.
- **-S-** Jesus healed everyone who came to Him in faith. This is so very different from today – healing is for only those who are deserving.
- **-S-** Jesus healed obvious physical diseases and disabilities – crippled legs, withered hands, leprosy, bent spines, blind eyes and deaf ears.
- **-S-** Jesus raised the dead and brought them back to life.

No one before Jesus nor since He walked this earth has ever done all these things. Jesus continues His miraculous demonstration of His power today. It is a miracle when a dead soul is given life. As Albert Einstein said, **-S-** "Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts." This maybe true today, even of those who call themselves Christian. This is why the New Testament is always addressing the remnant – the true believers set apart from the world.

As we study the beginning of chapter nine we can break these twelve verses into four parts – **-S-** The Problem, **-S-** The Purpose, **-S-** The Power and **-S-** The Perplexity.

### **-S-** The Problem

Beginning in verse one, **-S-** "As He (Jesus) passed by, He saw a man blind from

birth.” The opening of the verse “As He passed by...” leads one to think this might have occurred as Jesus left the temple. We know that since Jesus sent the man to wash his eyes **-S-** “in the pool of Siloam” which is a rock-cut pool on the southern slope of the City of David, that this story takes place in Jerusalem.

**-S-** The Prophet Isaiah predicted in chapter 42 that the Messiah would give sight to the blind. We see in a number of places in the scriptures Jesus does just as Isaiah predicted. I found at least 8 cases of Jesus healing the blind and giving them sight in the other three gospels. Also, we find no explanation as to how the disciples knew the man was blind from birth – for in verse 2 they ask Jesus, **-S-** “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?” This man’s background may well have been common knowledge as he had been begging in Jerusalem for many years. Jesus’ knowledge went beyond what was common knowledge, for as God incarnate, He knows this man intimately. Jesus sees this man’s problem and He acts – He acts quickly, completely and heals with purpose.

### **-S-** The Purpose

The Purpose for Jesus’ action is revealed in His answer to the disciples after they asked Him, **-S-** “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind? **-S-** Jesus answered, *‘It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.’*” In Old Testament times and you have to remember even though Jesus **is** the New Testament He lived in and taught to people of the Old Testament. The common belief was that if you had a disease you were a sinner being punished by God. The sins of the other people may not have been physically apparent as this mans, but they were equally as real. **-S-** “... there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory

of God.” (Romans 3:22-23) I do not believe the disciples, who would become apostles, had really grasped this concept yet. **-S-** After all would it not be natural for them to feel somewhat superior to other Jews because they had been chosen by, were being taught by and they were serving alongside the Messiah? This is the problem we Christians can suffer from today. Yet, there is no basis for feelings of superiority because we cannot claim any responsibility in our salvation – we were spiritually dead and Jesus, by His grace and mercy, opened our blind eyes so that we could see Him.

Jesus now in the second half of verse 3 makes His purpose clear, **-S-** “*but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.*” As with all miracles, healings and ministry the primary purpose is to bring glory to God. This does **not** mean however, that God deliberately caused this man to be born blind – for this assumption would go against the character of God. The result of sin in the world is blindness and disease. What Jesus is saying is that God has overruled this man’s blindness so that he would see the glory of God in the face of Jesus, who is the Christ and others seeing this miracle will then turn to the true “*Light of the world*” and turn away from rituals that do not save.

Jesus continues, **-S-** “*We must work the works of Him (God the Father) who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.*” Jesus will bring people out of the darkness of the corrupt Jewish society with its false pride and they will come to worship God, the true God and Him alone. It is the same today - it is only Jesus that brings us out of our corrupt society and transforms our souls so that we become children of God. At this time Jesus knew that His crucifixion is still before Him, but He will not tire, He has a sense of urgency to do the works of God. Darkness will come when He is laid in the grave. The true **Light of the World** will be

lost until He rises from the dead and demonstrates to the world He is the living God. Jesus cannot be any clearer than He is in verse 5, **-S-** “While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.” Just as the light on the face of Moses faded and just as the light of God that once stood as a pillar of fire before the Jewish people has faded into man-made rituals and has lost the flame - but Jesus now reignites the spiritual flame in the hearts and souls of those He calls.

Jesus who was the spiritual **-S-** “Light of the world” continued to bring light into the world after His death through the apostles and continues today through Christians who have surrendered their lives and truly live through Him. True children and slaves emulate their Master and share the saving gospel with the lost – with all who have ears to hear. God has been telling His people from the time of Abraham in Genesis chapter 26 that His children are to bring His light to all the nations of the world. The question is obedience and faithfulness. The Prophet Isaiah wrote, **-S-** “I (God the Father) will also make You (the Lord Jesus) a light to the nations so that My (God the Father) salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (Isaiah 49:6) This is what God sent Christ to do and what His children are to do until Christ returns. Again, it is a question of faithfulness – are you and I being faithful? Luke records the words of Paul making the cause of Christ even more clear, **-S-** “For so the Lord has **commanded** us, ‘I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.’ ” (Acts 13:47) You see it is not God’s suggestion we bring the “Light of the world” to those we meet in our daily life, but a command – the question is are you being faithful to share the gospel with the lost as commanded by God? The Apostle Paul wrote, **-S-** “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are



without excuse.” (Romans 1:20) We have no excuse the true “Light of the world” permeates all the earth and is before the eyes of all. We are called to share the saving gospel with the lost - to be obedient to Christ for He alone is the Light and Power of true life.

## **-S-** The Power

Jesus as the Son of God has power to do all that He promised and much more – He knows no limit. His healing of the blind man was instant and complete. **-S-** “When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, and said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came *back seeing*.” (John 9:6-7) The Lord made His point and His teachable moment with the disciples is now complete - so He turned to the blind man and healed him. Spitting to make clay seems a little gross from the viewpoint of today’s germ phobia society. But if this gets to you - look what Jesus did earlier to the deaf and dumb man. **-S-** “Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue *with the saliva*; and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, ‘Ephphatha!’ (*ef fath ah*) that is, ‘Be opened!’ **-S-** And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he *began speaking plainly*.” (Mark 7:33-35) Why Jesus used spit, as part of the healing process is not clear. Although I wonder when God the Father made Adam out of dust if He spit into the dust to make it into clay? Just a random thought. However, Jesus always had reason for what He did, even though today we may not clearly understand it. The bottom-line is He healed this man who had been blind from birth and demonstrated a miracle by the power of God. Jesus sends the man to the **-S-** “pool of Siloam” which is the same pool the priest drew water from for the

Feast of Tabernacles. John's note shows there is a connection between Jesus command to go to the pool and the meaning of its name – which means, “Sent.” The man is obedient and does as Jesus commands and he returns seeing. When we are obedient to the commands of God the Father and Jesus, God the Son and the Word of God, the Scriptures, we too are given spiritual sight by the Light of God. Obedience is key for without it there is confusion and darkness.

### **-S-** The Perplexity

Jesus' instant healing caused a sensation among those present and the neighbors who quickly heard about this miracle of the man born blind and who had been a beggar for years. Reading the last four verses, **-S-** “Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, ‘Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?’ Others were saying, ‘This is he,’ *still* others were saying, ‘No, but he is like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the one.’ So they were saying to him, ‘How then were your eyes opened?’ He answered, ‘The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash’; so I went away and washed, and I received sight.’ They said to him, ‘Where is He?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’ ” These people would rather believe in a mistaken identity – “No, but he is like him,” than believe in the miracle that Jesus did to glorify God. People would rather spend large amounts of energy to find any answer other than God. If they admit there is a God then that makes them accountable. The Pharisees will later repeat this assertion of mistaken identity because they do not want to be accountable to God, but in truth, they want to control God. Why? So they can do as they wish. Nothing has changed - the attitude and hearts of mankind is the same today as it was at the time of Christ. But, for those who are saved by faith God offers a solution to their lost state through Christ. This formerly blind man's

faith is simple, but true – he simply says, “I am the one” healed by “the man who is called Jesus.” The man knows that Jesus gave him sight and that Jesus is from God and he showed no interest in the politics or wrangling of these different groups looking for any solution, but God.

This is a story of God’s salvation for mankind. People are blinded by their sin, are lost and have no ability to recognize God or even the things of God and will jump through every hoop to find answers that exclude God. **-S-** They cannot find Him because for those who are lost the hardest truth to see is the truth of Jesus before their very eyes, so they remain blind. It was Jesus who sought out this blind man, healed him and gave him sight. **-S-** It is Jesus that seeks us out and breathes spiritual life into our souls as God breathed life into Adam. Our souls were as dry and dead as the dust God used to make Adam before Christ breathed life into us. Just as the blind man was healed only when he obeyed Jesus by going to the pool and washing his eyes – so too sinners are saved only when they humbly come before God and accept salvation through Christ and embrace the truth of the Gospel and the Holy Scriptures.

My beloved – **-S-** the answer and solution is that the truth is before our eyes - before all eyes - believe and obey!