

Twice Touched Forever Changed

Dr. John Carmichael

[Mar 8:22-26 NASB95] 22 And they came to Bethsaida. And they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored Him to touch him. 23 Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, "Do you see anything?" 24 And he looked up and said, "I see men, for I see [them] like trees, walking around." 25 Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and [began] to see everything clearly. 26 And He sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."

- "We want what we want and we want it now. If it is not instant, it's not supernatural." These statements reveal the mentality of many modern Spirit-empowered believers.
- God is the God of the Suddenly. He is also a God of the Progressively.
- God created the earth in 7 days not 1 day. God did not give the land to His people at once but gradually.
 - [Deu 7:22 NASB95] 22 "The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to put an end to them quickly, for the wild beasts would grow too numerous for you.
 - [Exo 23:29 NASB95] 29 "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.
- In Mark 8, we read a story about a blind man who received a miracle. Jesus laid hands on him twice. The miracle of the blind man came in stages.

What does this story (Jesus laying hands on a blind man twice) tell us about God's progressive work in our lives?

Here are six observations from this story that speak to us about God's progressive work in our lives.

I. Change happens when we come to Jesus.

- a. V. 22 – He allowed his friends to bring him to Jesus.
- b. Change starts with an encounter with God.
- c. Peniel – Jacob wrestles with the angel. [Gen 32:30-31 NASB95] So Jacob named the place Peniel, for [he said,] "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved." Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh.
- d. Choose to go after God with everything you have. Pray. Bible reading. Church. Fasting.

II. Change happens when we follow Jesus.

- a. V. 23 – He allowed Jesus to lead him away from the familiar to the unknown even though he could not see where they were going.
- b. Jesus calls us to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow Him. [Luk 9:23 NASB95] 23 And He was saying to [them] all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.
- c. Our opinion needs to match His opinion. Our methods match His methods.

III. Change happens when we yield to Jesus.

- a. V. 23 – Jesus spit on him, not as an insult, and laid His hands on him. This was probably not the preferred process the blind man consented to.
- b. Most likely, you will have to make a change in order to experience a change. To prosper, to heal your marriage, to get healthy, to succeed in ministry, you will likely need

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to change something. God will likely ask you to make a change in order to experience change.

c. [Phi 2:12-13 NASB95] 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for [His] good pleasure.

d. We do not always get to choose the process. We submit to His will and plan.

IV. Change happens when we focus on what Jesus has done in our lives.

a. V. 24 – Jesus asked him to consider what is going right in his life as opposed to what is going wrong or is still left to be complete.

b. Abraham did not consider his own body, nearly dead, he just focused on the promise. [Rom 4:19 NASB95] 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb;

c. Cloud the size of a man's hand. [1Ki 18:44 NASB95] 44 It came about at the seventh [time,] that he said, "Behold, a cloud as small as a man's hand is coming up from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare [your chariot] and go down, so that the [heavy] shower does not stop you.'"

d. Check yourself for growth not perfection.

V. Change happens when we allow the process to come to completion.

a. V. 24-25 – The healing took two touches. He allowed Jesus to do it again.

b. θεραπεύω (therapeuō) - Renner – process miracle overtime, rather than instant. Many, if not most, of the miracles were over time. Therefore, θεραπεύω can certainly indicate a healing process, making it suitable for both progressive and instant healings, depending on the situation.

c. He who began a good work in you will complete it. [Phi 1:6 NASB95] 6 [For I am] confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

d. Have confidence that God is going to finish the work. He is Alpha (the beginning) and Omega (the ending.) He finishes what He starts.

VI. Change happens when we refuse to go back to where we came from.

a. V. 26 – The village represents going back to the where he was before.

b. He who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy. [Luk 9:62 NASB95] 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

c. Lot's wife. [Luk 17:32 NASB95] 32 "Remember Lot's wife.

d. Decide you are going forward toward what God has for you.

- **God's supernatural change that He wants to bring in your life may have a progressive nuance to it that will require you to come to Jesus, make changes, trust His methods, and refuse to go backward while not becoming discouraged that the change is not instant.**