

Insisting on the Impossible

February 12, 2006 at Agape Chinese Baptist Church

John 9 (Scripture reading 9:35-41)

Intro: a Super Bowl XL victory

The Pittsburgh Steelers' march to a Super Bowl XL victory: How many of you watched the Super Bowl game last Sunday, February 5 from 5p.m? There was a particular moment when Seattle's Seahawks allowed the Steelers to get their feet underneath them and then watched Willie Parker break free and went a Super Bowl-record 75 yards on the second play of the second half. In the end, it was impossible for Seahawks to overcome that 11-point deficit. The Steelers had the momentum they needed to win the title.

In many ways, Agape has mimicked the success of this particular Super Bowl in the past five years of history. No. 1 in baptism in the state of OK (1700 churches!), moved into your own facility within five years! You've accomplished the impossible. Commendable! As fellow believers, we're so proud of your commitment to the Lord and faithful to His service. Because of each of you, Agape stands today strong in the testimony to Chinese community in Tulsa. And thanks to Pastor Tai's leadership and commitment! Pastor John Tai is my dear brother and co-laborer in the Lord, teacher, friend, and mentor. He is a godly man, dedicated to God and love His people. He is a man of prayers. The cooking skills and sumptuous food from this beautiful family (Mama Tai's *baozi*) is second to none!

But let me challenge you with this question: are you still excited about God? Or are some of you feeling that you've 'arrived'? Have some of you lost the excitement of experiencing God in a miraculous way? Activities, programs and great food to attract people, or should we lift up Christ higher so that people will be drawn unto Himself? Do you believe that God will continue to do the impossible?

Spiritual Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had thrown **him** (*who is he? – verses 1-3 context is very important. Any word, sentence, passage should be carefully studied within the proper context. In this case, the story of this man began at the first verse of Chapter 9 as one who was born blind*) out, and when he found him, he said, "**Do you believe** (*we ought to ask everyone coming to the church this very question – in fact ask the people sitting next to you this question now!*) in the Son of Man?"

36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that **I may believe in him.**" (*What a smart answer!*)

37 Jesus said, "You have now **seen** him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." (*The healing of this blind man took place on two levels: at the physical level his sight was restored. On the spiritual level he had come to faith in Christ. This man serve as a paradigm for Jesus' entire ministry.*)

38 Then the man said, "Lord, I **believe**," and he **worshiped** him. (*1 – what's purpose of a church? Worship (prostrate- illustration as needed; it is for God; not for you!) and Evangelism! 2 – how do we worship Him – in truth and spirit! Not just labial service...*)

39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

41 Jesus said, **"If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.**

The Impossible - #1

Do you believe in the Son of Man? (v. 35) – make this your No. 1 New Year's resolution!

Jesus came to clear the sight of human beings that had become blinded to the things of God. This is an impossible thing for human to do, even if you're the smartest person on earth.

John 9 Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

1As he went along, he saw **a man blind from birth**. 2His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, **who sinned, this man or his parents**, that he was born blind?" (*We tend to associate 'bad things' (by human standards and viewpoint) with sins and ...good things with blessings. Common perspectives of the day in this case are the blind man or his parents sinned in regards to this man's affliction. Common sense is not necessarily a good sense. Common perspective is NOT necessarily the right perspective. Human ideal is good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people. Yet good and bad things have their purposes whether they occur to good or bad people. Jesus, refuting the common misunderstanding and the wrong teaching of the hypocritical Pharisees, and declared that neither the blind man nor his parents had sinned. Rather the man was there at the moment for God to work in his life in order to glorify Jesus.*)

3"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the **work of God might be displayed in his life.**

Some famous quotes from 'I Believe' speech contest (with the winner, Okey Maduka of Nigeria, speaking in chapel Okey, a senior majoring in business administration with a minor in public relations & advertising, believes that taking classes in advertising and design has made him more creative) setting a goal and reach it. Settle for less. Manage the human possible; how about the God's impossible?

The Impossible - #2

He listens to the godly man **who does His will** (v. 31) – knowing **and doing** the will of God . Knowing God's will is one thing; doing it is yet another. How then do we know and do the will of God?

(1) Discipleship the disciple-makers!

("Experiencing God" by Henry Blackaby, which I did in 1997 and 2005)! Discipleship training should be non-stopping, either as a student; or later as a teacher. I've personally led Returning to Holiness(40D), Purpose Driven Life(40D), Experiencing God (13wks), Boundaries(8wks), GKGW (13wks), Seven Laws of Learners (7wks) and now Christian Home Finance(10wks). Today's Sunday school class on taxation at TIBC?

(2) Avoid legalism

6Having said this, he **spit on the ground**, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7"Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

*(Would some legalists carry this too far by taking the literal meaning. And if they were right, then Jesus is not a man abiding by social order as He 'spit on the ground'!)
(Every morning, I did Bible study with my three kids, and we were going through Proverb 20 on Tuesday morning. The 1st verse reads "wine is a mocker and beer is a brawler". I told them that alcohol can ruin a person if one is not careful with moderation. William asked 'why did Jesus turn the water into wine then. Did he want everybody to get*

drunk?’ Yet proper use of alcohols can help, such as cooking wine for better taste of food; and cleaners sanitize medical equipment. And in special happy occasion, such as in a wedding, according to Jewish tradition, people drink.)

(3) Guard your unity - The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

13They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. 16But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were **divided**.
(DIVIDED – God is unity and loves unity. But Jesus is controversial in human’s eyes, and so many people will divide, separate, and part company because of different viewpoints about Him or unfortunately His works at times. We tend to blame people for things that go wrong, for example, if someone leaves a church, we would blame our pastor! There may be a good purpose for ‘bad thing’ to happen. I’ve gone through that while we were building our church building. If the pastor were to be blame for the stagnation, then shouldn’t he also get ALL of the glory when the church was growing in numbers? Guys, everything is about God. If we didn’t do well last year, either individually or corporately as a church, simply admit it. Then repent, turn around and follow God unwaveringly. By the grace of God, we’ve another year! Do you believe that He can bring good out of ‘bad’ forgive sins, and bless your life change you, and grow His own church!?)

The Impossible - #3

It was **your eyes he opened**. (v. 17) – power and source of **your personal** testimony - The blind man’s simply testimony has been the incontrovertible evidence for the Christian faith for centuries. His final words carried the greatest sting: “if this man were not from God, he could do nothing” (9:33).

If you are a believer today, I invite you to reflect upon this simple fact that a perfect and all-powerful God always choose the feeble, lowly, imperfect man, like you and me, to accomplish His great and perfect purpose. It’s very difficult to understand, but it is true, that some of the work of God’s kingdom simply won’t get done without your part in it. Some people around you may never come to faith until you share, show and tell them about God! God has done miraculous things in your life: how/when/if are you going to share, tell, and show? Do you still remember your first encounter experience with God? Are you passionate about your love for God? Or perhaps that first love has died out? If you are a seeker today, don’t know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior – great news – He is ready to receive you, bless you, and lead you through miraculous transformation. II Corinthians 4:4 “the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

Invitation:

I was blind but now I see! (v. 25) – the blind will see and those who see will become blind (v. 39)

Admit that you’re sinners, and were blind to spiritual truth when we don’t know Christ.
Believe that Jesus came to this earth, died on the cross, and rose again after three days. He is able and will save us.

Confess He is Lord and receive eternal life. He is the only Way, Truth and Life.