

How does a blind man see? It begins with faith. In the 9th Chapter of Matthew, 2 men are blind. They call out to Jesus in unison, “Son of David, have pity on us!” Although they are without physical sight, they believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah by referring to him as the Son of David. Jesus responds to their faith and heals them. Jesus asks them to tell no one, but they can’t help themselves and they share the good news wherever they go.

How does a blind man see? It begins with faith. In the 20th Chapter of Matthew there is a nearly identical scene. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “[Lord,] Son of David, have pity on us!” (Mt 20:30). Jesus has pity on the two and heals their sight. He does not ask them to keep it a secret. They respond by following Jesus.

How does a blind man see? The disciples are blind. Jesus had just predicted his passion for the third time, and all of the disciples were clueless. The mother of James and John asks for her sons to have seats of honor when Jesus comes into his kingdom. Their faith is lacking, and they remain blind to the meaning of the passion until after the resurrection. Then their eyes are opened, and they can’t help themselves and they share the good news wherever they go.

When I was in the seminary, I recall being troubled by an incident with a man who had fallen out of his wheelchair on to the floor at home. As providence would have it, I and another classmate named Peter had been assigned to look in on him. We went to his apartment and found him utterly helpless. On the floor he had no way of helping himself up. He did not even have the strength to call out for help. Had the two of us not stopped by, there is no telling how long he would have been there. We helped him off the floor into his wheelchair and then took him to the lobby of the apartment building where some student nurses were taking vital signs.

Peter and I took the man back upstairs to his apartment and I began to speak with him. Peter found a mop and cleaned the floor up to avoid the possibility of another fall to the floor on a slippery surface. We moved on to visit others, but the student nurses did a little follow up and called an ambulance so the man could be transported to the hospital for better medical care.

How does a blind man see? It begins with faith. The following week, Peter and I were greeted as heroes for saving the man’s life. I scratched my head in disbelief. I certainly didn’t feel like any hero. Weeks later, I was reflecting on the incident in light of the Gospel of Luke and the story of the Good Samaritan. In the context of faith, the help we offered to the man-made sense. My eyes were opened. Neither Peter nor I would have been able to have done any good on our own. The man called out to God in prayer, and the Lord sent the two of us to help. We didn’t do anything miraculous. We saw a man who was suffering, and we reached out to help him. We didn’t take him to an inn, but we did take him to see people who had more medical knowledge than the two of us. God had also called these student nurses to be in the right place at the right time so they could be part of the healing solution. They also had a part to play. Ultimately, the physicians in the hospital provided the necessary care to stabilize the man’s health.

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ... ill and you cared for me... Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (25:35,36, 40). Jesus can cure the blind and heal the ill, but he asks for our help. It takes faith on our part to see a need and respond.

We are in the season of Advent. One might say, it is a season to work on our eyesight so that we may all improve our ability to see through the eyes of faith. “Son of David, have pity on us!” (Mt 9:27, 20:31).