

“The Works of God”
By Pastor Andy Giebler
Sunday, June 17th, 2019

Amen. Praise God. Remain standing for a second for the reading of God's Word. John nine, one through three:

John 9:1-3 *And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

Let us pray. God, Almighty, we thank You. We thank You for Your presence, here. We thank You just for saving us, for loving us. God, we thank You just for a time just to worship You, a time to feel You, a time to just be in worship. God, we just thank You for honoring our praise, for just allowing us to be in Your presence, for showing us Your truth. Thank You. God, bless me as I minister, as I share, as I teach. God, let me know the way. Let Your Word flow through me. Thank You. In Jesus name, amen.

You may be seated. That's not fair, Malcolm, you got us all worked up and worn out, and now I've got to work hard to get anything done. Let me read his again:

John 9:1-3 *And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

We've been talking about the things that the disciples asked Jesus. They asked the question, about this man, “Who sinned?” And Jesus said, “Neither one.” It's not about the man's sin. It's not about him at all. Well, in the end, it is, but it's about that the work of God should be made manifest. The work of God is that men would come to the knowledge, that people would believe on Jesus. Because that's the work that was being done. That he saw that He was God. The God was manifest in Him, but he believed it on Him, the man that was blind. The people that saw, not all of them, but men and women saw that this man was blind, was made to see again. And they believed on Jesus. But, I take a few things out of this Scripture: one is, that as we read through it, we find out that the Pharisees, and the Jews that didn't want to believe this thing, didn't want God to get Glory from this man, Jesus. They didn't want Jesus to be given the credit for this. And, in John, nine, as we go down further into the passage, in eighteen, verse eighteen, it says:

John 9:18 *But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.*

They went and got his parents. They said, “Ah, we've got to go check this thing out.” They wanted to find any way out of this. And, the parents said, “We don't want no trouble here. He's of age, go ask him.” And, if we go down to verse twenty-four, it says:

John 9:24 *Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.*

And, here, right now, this is just an example of things that we see every day, because if we go on our job, on our workplace, in our schools, no matter where we're at, when we go to do whatever we do, and we give God glory, if I say, "Man, God bless me, God use me, God do this for me." You can bet there's probably a half a dozen people ready to say, "What are you talking about? There's no God." Because they don't want to glorify God in their own lives. They don't want the change. They don't want what God's got for them; they want their own comfortable life. The Pharisees were so into the law, that they couldn't they couldn't accept Jesus. They couldn't accept Him for what He was. They wanted, "Oh, we're disciples of Moses." We infer into that. In twenty-five:

John 9:25 *He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*

And, that's the testimony that we can have, even if we it's just as simple as, "I was a sinner, I was far from God, and God healed me. God brought me back again." It could be that just that simple.

John 9:26 *Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?*

And, people are going to ask you, "What did this God do for you?" and all we have to share with them is, "God opened my eyes." Maybe that's all we have, sometimes, that God healed me. God forgive me of my sins. God did so much more, but that's the crux right there. People want to live in their own world. Even today. I'm thankful to have the truth. I'm thankful to be in this congregation. I'm able thankful to be able to be with people, brothers and sisters, men and women, who take seriously God's work, who take seriously being the Church of God. Reading on, in twenty-seven:

John 9:27 *He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? [then he asked them] will ye also be his disciples?*

I'm sure they really didn't like that.

John 9:28-30 *Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.*

So, here he is firing back at the rulers, the Pharisees, the ones who were saying, "Hey, we're the knowledgeable ones, here. "How is something so awesome done, and you don't know about it? How is something so awesome, so wonderful done, and you don't know who this man is?" And, that's how I feel sometimes, and we should feel, when we're out and about, and we talk with people, we share with people, and they're like, "We don't understand this power." How can you not know? How can you not know this Jesus? How can you not feel His presence? How can you not touch Him? How can you not reach out to Him? How can you not know the power of God? Because, it's a wonderful thing, and I know that for me, I know there was a time—I grew up religious, I grew up in a family of preachers, I even married into a preacher's family. My dad preached, my grandfather, my uncle; I have a cousin who pastors a church in Indiana, but that didn't make me who I am. That wasn't what made me whole. That isn't what saved me. I was kind of your typical preacher's kid, so, I was into trouble. I, maybe, sometimes

right on the edge of doing what I knew I was supposed to do, because this is what Dad said I'm supposed to do, this is what grandpa expects me to do, but, yet, I knew there was something that I needed, and I knew the day that God open my eyes. Because I knew there was a day when I acknowledged I was blind. I heard, I'm not sure who it was, a couple of weeks ago, sharing a similar testimony: in high school, there was a time when I had gone out, I was with my friends, we didn't do anything really crazy wrong, but we went out and had fun with the things that we knew to do. And, the week before, I was with my friends talking about it; they had gone out and did what they did for that Friday night, and I wasn't with him. And, on that Saturday, we were talking about it; just participating in the conversation sounded like so much fun, everything they did. But, the following week we did, to the T, everything that we talked about the week before, and it was more fun to have talked about it, that it was to actually go out and do the things that we had talked about. Why? Because there was no presence of God. There was no—and it was just emptiness. It was just—and that was the night I realized, “God, I need You. I need something different. I need something different in my life.” And that's what God started showing me a different direction. And, to make it worse, somewhere along in that time, I went to bed, and I said, “God,” because, I was kind of told about who God was, and is He real, and I knew there was something there that I was missing, and I said, “God, if I were to die tonight, and not go to Heaven, then don't let me sleep.” And, you know, I didn't sleep that night. I did not sleep until, it was probably two in the morning, when I said, “Okay, God, I get it. I need something.” When I acknowledged God, I need You, He let me sleep for a couple of hours. But, until that point, I'm laying up in bed, kind of feeling the fire of hell, and fear—you know, I'm scared. I can't sleep. But, I know God opened my eyes. And, we know that here we had Jesus, in this example. Jesus was the one who came in and made clay, and put it on his eyes, and said, “Go and wash.” He said, “Go do these things.” But, from the beginning of time, God's been with us. In John, one, chapter one, it says,

John 1:1-5 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

God's light has been manifested many ways throughout history, thousands of years ago. Jesus is the light, and the head in this passage. God we have God's spirit in us now. We have the Comforter; we have the Holy Ghost. We have that light that's in our lives that shines and shows us things. And, whether it's Jesus walking on Earth, the Word made flesh, who bent down and took, and spit, and made clay out of the dirt, one of the dirtiest things you could think to do, and said, “Here, I'm going to anoint your eyes with it, and you're going to see.” And, today, we have baptism. Something as silly as going and being dunked in a tank. But, it's bigger than that; it's believing in Jesus, and being buried in the likeness of His death, raised up in the likeness of His resurrection. God's been there throughout all eternity. He's here right now. And, I realized that no matter what I do, that people aren't going to like it. There's always going to be darkness in the world. There's going to be those that don't want to see this light. The darkness comprehended it not. But, we have something, as well. We have God's Spirit. Matthew, five, thirteen through sixteen, He said:

Matthew 5:13-16 *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

So, we see here in this example that, you know, we may not get a good reception from people when we say, "God did this for me," and this man probably thought to himself, or, could have thought to himself, maybe, "Why do I have to go through this?" It doesn't really say how old he was, I don't think, but, "Why did I have to be born blind to see that?" God's ways are not always what we would choose. When God says do something, and shows us something, it may not be the comfortable thing to do, it may not be something that I like, but it's God's ways. Isaiah fifty-five, verses eight and nine:

Isaiah 55:8-9 *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

We'll look at Paul for a minute. Paul had a thorn in the flesh. There's a lot of debate, but I don't believe we know exactly what that fault was, but we have an idea. In Second Corinthians, twelve, six through ten:

2 Corinthians 12:6-10 *For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

Paul could have looked at this lot of ways. But, he did the one thing, the one example that I draw from this is he went and sought God. He didn't go cry, "Woe is me," he didn't say, "I'm not going to do what God called me to do," he said, "I'm going to glory in this." Because he sought God three times. And, he said God told him, "My grace is sufficient for thee." And, sometimes we have things in our lives that are just there, and God's left them there for a reason. Though, when I read the Scripture, I'm reminded, sometimes I hear people say, "I have this thorn in the flesh." Well, my first question is, "How do you know? How do you know that God put that there for you? Have you prayed about it, have you asked God about it?" some of us walk through life with a hindrance, with a thorn, with a thought, with an idea, with something keeping us from God, but we haven't really put it before the throne of God. We have to say, "God, is this a thorn?" We could have said, "God, take it away." We might have, just in the moment of the problem, said, "God take this away," but, have you really sought God? Have you really communicated with God? Have we taken the time to have fellowship with God over this thing? Have we done a fleece test? Have we said, "God, just take this away?" and prayed about it until God gave us an answer, or took it away? How many of you know how to do your job without talking to your boss or your supervisor? You can't do it. You have to know your job. I mean, you may know how to do it, now. But, you had to learn it from somebody else. Someone had to tell you what your job was to do. And, you don't get that without listening, and having a conversation with your boss. Sometimes, your boss may say do something, your supervisor says do this, but sometimes you have to have a conversation to gain the full understanding. Sometimes we have to ask questions. Sometimes we have to ask the question again, because I just don't get it. Boss explained it right, but I missed a piece. Do we do that with God? Do we do that with God when He tells us to do something? Sometimes I don't understand. I've left this here for you. I don't understand, God. We don't know unless we pray, and I've heard it said, and I love this, "Prayer is not just a one-way thing; prayer's two ways." Prayer means having a conversation. Not

just hitting my knees and crying out, “Oh, God this is wrong,” I'm done. I've got to stop and listen. Now, if I go to my boss, and I'm asking a question, and I've got my headphones in, and I've got music playing, am I going to have a chance of understanding what the boss says? No, I've got a distraction. Sometimes, in life, we have to spiritually take the headphones off. Spiritually, take the time to say, “God, I need something from you.” Put the distractions out of the way, sometimes that takes a few minutes. Sometimes that can take hours. It's not a matter of, “Up, I did my five minutes, I asked my questions, I waited a couple of minutes, didn't get it.” Sometimes you can take an hour before you even ask Him. I know that seems like a lot of time, in the midst of our needs, or our busy schedules, God honors that. When you take the time to let the world go by, maybe sing a song, just to sing a praise to God when you're on your knees, when you're walking around whatever place you're in, your prayer closet—how many of you got a place to go where you can go and pray? Sometimes—I mean, there's prayers we do on the fly, and sometimes—sometimes we really need to take the time to pray. Some of the best places to pray were in a steel room with big heavy steel doors when I've locked myself in a fan room on the ship, or even better yet, go up topside. In the Navy, on the ship, I was blessed to have a workspace that was on top of everything on the ship, and I could go as high as—higher than anyone else on the ship, unless I was climbing up the mast, just to be away from everyone. And, I could just be there in the middle of the night, look at the stars, and, I remember, one night, when I'm looking up, all I can see from horizon to horizon is stars, and I realized just how insignificant that I am. But, yet, God loves me. But, God wants to teach you something. God wants to show us things. And John, fifteen, fifteen, it says:

John 15:15 *Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

That's Jesus in the flesh. And, we have that same path to the Father now. He wants to make things known to us. We're not just a servant, we're not just a blind robot just doing what we're told to do. We're servants, but, yet, we're a family. We have an heir to the throne. We have the power to become sons of God. We have the power to talk to Him, to listen to Him, to hear Him. Just, “...**all things that I've heard of My Father I have made known unto you.**” God can make those things known unto you. It doesn't matter your circumstance. Doesn't matter where you're at. God can make those things known to you.

And, to go along with this, understanding the works of God. Going back to the first verse, John, nine, three, Jesus said:

John 9:3 *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

The works of God were going to be made manifest in him. He didn't even know what was going on, except for someone put some mud on his eyes and told him to go wash. And, he knew, when he washed that off his eyes, there was no doubt that he had been healed. John, chapter six, verse twenty-eight:

John 6:28-29 *Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

It's just as simple as believing on God. All these things—we ask so many times, “Why does this happen? Why did this have to happen? Why did I have to go through this?” That the works of God might be made manifest in me, that other people would see. Because, it was—like I said, he knew nothing except for he was blind and all of the sudden he could see. But, those around him, Jesus was made

manifest. The power of God was made manifest in this man. It had nothing to do with him. And, each of each one of us in this room, the power of God can be made manifest through you. Even things that you do that you don't even know that you do. Why? Because you listen to God, when God tells you to do something. Sometimes you may not even be aware of it, but you're in the Spirit. And, we're in this world, we're not of it. We're here to be spiritual. You read the Scripture, on the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering... We want to say, "How do we get those?" Walk in the spirit. If I walk in the Spirit, then those things are going to come. And, if we walk in the Spirit, God's going to do things through you. And, you may not even know how you were affecting people's lives. I've heard people share, and had people come to me and ask me things, and, "I don't remember doing that." I've heard other people share that someone came to them and I said, "I saw you do this." "I didn't even think about it." But, we're walking in the Spirit. We're listening to Him. We're doing the things of God. Why? That the works of God will be done, and people would believe on Him. And, sometimes, it's someone gave us a hard time; it's how we handle it. Sometimes doing something where, "I don't have to do that." Let somebody else do that." God pricks your heart, "Go do it."

I have to say, I was looking at a few examples of the disciples and Peter, and far be it for me to be critical of Peter, but there's things that we see in the Scriptures that are there for our examples. Things to show us people shielding us, how we are, how we could be, so that we can learn from what other people did. There was a couple of places where Peter did some things that Jesus had to say, "No. This is not right. You don't know what you're doing or what you're of." Even the disciples, at one point, you look at Mark, chapter nine, verse thirty-one:

Mark 9:31-36 *For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, **The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.** But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him. And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, **What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.** And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, **If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.** And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,*

So, this is just after He had taught them, and said, "This is what's going on." And they're busy disputing who's going to be the greatest. They didn't quite grasp what Jesus was saying. To have Jesus say, "I'm going to die. I'm going to be delivered up into the hands of men." And they're worried about who's going to be the greatest. And, even, after, we talked a few weeks ago about another question, "Who will be the greatest?" And we talked about, "Who do men say that I am? And who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:13-16) And, this is after Jesus had asked Peter, and He said, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to you," (Matthew 16:17) and, shortly thereafter, Jesus says "I'm going to be killed. I'm going to be lifted up among all men, and I'm going to be crucified." (Matthew 16:21) And Jesus, as Jesus shared this, Peter took Him aside—and I'm kind of taking my liberty, how I imagined this happening, but, Peter looking at Jesus, said, "No, no, this is not going to happen. This is not the way it's going to go down. This is not how things are going to end. You're our leader. You've opened blinded eyes, You've healed people, and we're going to let You be killed? No, I'm not letting you do that." (Matthew 16:22) Peter was not going to let Jesus go and die in this way. But Jesus rebuked him. He said, "You know not what you're of." (Matthew 16:23) You see, Peter didn't understand what Jesus was about to do. And, later on, and Luke, twenty-two, it says

Luke 22:32 *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

Convert: turn back. That could be any of us. Sometimes we lose our way. We have to be converted and turn back; run this race. And, He's telling Peter, be converted and strengthen your brother. Because he had a calling on his life. Peter had something to do; God gave him something to do. And, each one of us has something to do. And, sometimes we get into the lull of what we're going to do here, coming into the building, having a church service, this is what's going to happen, we're going to sing a song, we're going to do this, and we're going to have a Wednesday night bible study, and we're going to go, Wednesday night, to a coffee shop, and we're in the rut. I've been there. Can't afford to be there. When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. Be converted. Get to the point where you don't have to turn back. Be walking in that spirit, being in that Spirit, living in that spirit daily. So, when your brother or sister has a need, that you're there. But, you should strengthen your brothers and sisters. Go out and teach the gospel, preach it, share it with boldness, in a way that people receive it. Not in a way that that they look at us like, "Yeah, I went to church, another church last week. You're no different than them." I don't want to be that. I don't want to stand up in this pulpit and people say, "Yeah, that was nice. I'll go back to this church down the street." I don't want that. I'm not trying to be anything of myself. But, I want God to move through me.

And, even Peter in the garden, they come to take Him away, and Peter grabs his sword, and lops off the ear of the high servant. And, Jesus, what does He do? He puts it back on. He said, "I must bear this cup. I have to go do this. This is my cup to bear. This is what I'm supposed to do." (Luke 22:49-51, John 18:10-11) And, we see, later on, Peter did do great things, wonderful things. We don't need to defend Jesus. We need to defend the Gospel. We need to share the Gospel. We need to preach it; we need to be bold about it. But Jesus doesn't need us to defend Him. But, we have the work of God to do. We have something to share. We have to make sure that our works are made manifest, that our works are to manifest Christ to people who don't believe on Him. It's just that simple. Let your light so shine (Matthew 5:16). We need to learn of God. Sometimes, even, no matter where we're at, we have to realize, we have to be listening to Him. When couples date, eyes are wide open, ears are perked up, paying attention to everything. Even after we got married, this is one thing that I did, that, I learned how my wife drank her coffee. I tasted it, and I made sure I could make it that way. And here, eighteen years later, I was thinking about this, and I don't think I could make it right, right now, because I haven't done it in a while, I haven't thought about it. It's just a simple thing. I had to go back and relearn how to make the coffee the way she liked it, because I had forgotten. So, we have to go back sometimes, and relearn. Sometimes we have to realize where we're at. Sometimes it's just an honesty. Just an honest truth, honest understanding of God, honest admission sometimes. To me, I have to do this; we have to do this. Where are we at in God. But, the things that I used to do, when I would go and pray, and God would bless me, and I get to the point where I don't feel it, anymore. God didn't walk away. God didn't move. God's right there all the time. Then, I have to go back and say, "What is it that I have put between me and God?" And, as a reference, I have one more Scripture to read, but I really want to stay on this point for another minute, what have I put in my life? As a church, what do we put in our lives? As individuals, what do we put in between us and God, not even realizing it? Is it my television? My books that I read? The music that I listen to? The people that I hang out with? The language I allow myself to use? Drugs, alcohol? Little things that we may call little things. I can use a little bit of this, and, no, the Bible doesn't say you can't drink. It said not to be drunk, but that doesn't change the fact that each and every one of us have the Holy Ghost in our lives. Each and every one of us gets pricked by God. And, if God tells you don't do something, it doesn't matter if—you may say, "the Scripture doesn't say I can't do that," so, I may never know that. you may have something that God told you never to do it again. I may never know about it. I don't need to. Let me say that again: There may be things that God has told you to do not to do or to stop doing, to start doing, I may never know it. Why? Because I'm accountable for me in judgment. And, as leadership, we can watch and learn and see what's going on, in the end, the things

that God showed you in private, unless God shows it to me, I don't know. You know what it is. Matthew, five, thirteen:

Matthew 5:13-16 *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Amen. Let your light shine. Thank you.