John 9:1-6, Joshua 6:15-16, 20-21

“All I need is a miracle”

 This is going to be a bit of a different sermon today. Normally we look at the Old and New Testament and break down the Scripture and from God’s Word we glean the lesson that God is trying to teach us. Today, well, it is going to be much more anecdotal. I can tell you about miracles in the Bible and explain them and use cross references and interject Hebrew and Greek words to lead you along, but that may not move you to make an application in your life that hey, this can also happen to me. Because that is what we hope you will leave with on Sundays that the Bible is speaking to me and here is at least one thing that I can apply in my life because I heard it in church.

 But if I tell you miracle stories in everyday life that people of God just like you have experienced, and then make the connection that you too can experience that then maybe, just maybe, you may be able to walk away from church today actually believing that miracles do happen to people like us. We are going to talk about miracles today. Hey, a special prize goes to the one who knows from where this sermon title came. Let’s read Scripture.

**READ**

 The healing of the man born blind is one of those Scriptures that is well known. It takes place on the Sabbath which we hear later in the chapter gets Jesus into trouble. But the question that is asked by his disciples sets up the healing. They are walking through Jerusalem and they see this poor blind man whom everyone knew because he was blind from birth. We don’t have it so much here in Strasburg, maybe we do, but I know in NYC when I spent some time there I would always see the same people asking for help on the street. Over time you just know who they are. They could be the son of a good friend, or a schoolmate as well.

 Everyone knew him and he was a pretty decent guy, Jesus, why was he born blind. I mean, whose fault was it that he was born blind. Back then, if you had a disease or were blind, or handicapped in any way it was a result of sin according to the theology of the day. Who sinned Jesus, did he sin or did his parents that caused him to be born this way. We aren’t talking about a crack baby where you can easily identify the sins of the parent with the condition of the child.

 Whose fault is it? It would be as if we asked whose fault is it when a woman dies from breast cancer or a man from cancer. There is no way to lay the blame at anyone’s feet for these types of diseases, such is the case for the man born blind. In fact, Jesus says in verse 3, no, it isn’t anybody’s fault, he was born blind for a specific purpose, and it is God’s purpose. He was born blind so that God’s works could be revealed. Okay, we are going to do a little bit of Greek here. The Greek word used here for work is semeion. Remember when a few weeks ago we preached on the miracle of Jesus turning the water to wine and we said that all of Jesus’ miracles especially in John were called semeion, which meant signs. Everything that Jesus does miraculously is a sign pointing back to him as the Son of God. This man was born blind so that a miracle could be done that would point out who the Son of Man truly is. And that is exactly what happens next.

 The details are interesting. We don’t see anything like this in Scripture anywhere else. He uses a healing salve of mud and spit, puts it on his eyes, and then tells him to go wash it off in the public pools. The man does exactly what he is told to do, and he comes back to Jesus, and is healed. A man born blind is healed because God chose to heal him. Yes, he did absolute what God told him to do and when to do it. Just like Naaman did when he washed in the Jordan to be healed of his leprosy. But it was God who chose to heal the blind man.

 Great story, isn’t it? I mean, is it just a great story, along with Jericho and its walls come tumbling down. Just a great story to teach in Sunday School to reinforce the notion that God fights for you, protects you, loves you. But does God still heal the blind man today? Do miracles still happen today or are they merely object lessons in Scripture?

 Rosanna and Stefano called us in tears and asked if we could come to their house to pray with them. We did…Miracles do happen.

 In Lancaster the waterstreet mission was asked if they could spare 20 beds for a ministry that was expecting some homeless that evening. … Miracles do happen.

 If you are going through life saying all I need is a miracle, I am here to tell you they are right in front of you. But they are not reliant upon your faith to happen, but rather on Almighty God.

 Nonna… It wasn’t a lack of faith but God’s miracles revealed to the blind, even if they did both have Master’s degrees from Princeton.

 We live in an extraordinary time in history right now. Do you see the miracles that are unfolding before us? Besides the barbaric killing of Khaddafi, Arab spring is in full bloom. This miracle is far deeper than just political. I could discuss for hours the political ramifications of what is happening in the Arab world, but what really interests me is the potential for Christ to be proclaimed anew in many of these areas. Yes, I know the imperialist history that plagues Christianity in that part of the world, but the presence of Christ in any reawakening is absolutely crucial for any individual or country to develop.

 I saw firsthand in Russia a society deprived of the church, the body of Christ, for 80 years wake from its slumber and being opening its arms to Christ. Besides the Russian Orthodox Church, today do you know what was the single most important event for Christianity in Russia in the past century? Billy Graham. Sounds too superficial, doesn’t it. You can’t find a new church plant in Moscow that wasn’t affected by the evangelistic crusade of Billy Graham. We find ourselves in a similar time and place where miracles like these are ripe and waiting to happen.

 I pray the same would happen for China. Who was to blame for that 2 year old little girl run over twice and lying in the street for 15 minutes with pedestrians stepping over her as she lay bleeding to death. Her death has sparked an outrage and I hope an awareness that a society without a rudder is bound to sooner or later crash. I don’t mean financially, I see China continuing to grow in leaps and bounds, but it is a morally bankrupt society. That is what happens when God is locked out of a culture. I’ve lived in that environment. I pray that the awareness of that littler girl’s death will spark a miracle in China that will open its arms to the Gospel.

 Joshua was getting ready to fight the battle of Jericho. No real battle actually took place. He only did what God told him to do. March around the city 7 times, blow the trumpets as you do, and then when you are done yell really loudly. Okay, ready, break. That is exactly what happened. The walls come tumbling down and they capture the city.

 That could be us, each one of us. God wants us to see Him daily in our lives. The walls of blindness, spiritual blindness can come tumbling down if we obey him to bring the Gospel into the world and into this neighborhood, the walls of death are able to come down if we are able to have more celebrations of people’s life like we did yesterday for Dorothy mayhew.

 If you are here today and thinking, all I need is a miracle, well I hope that you were able to hear real life stories of miracles that happen to ordinary people just like you and me. One was a blind man, the other was Joshua, and the whole testimony of people who have followed the Savior you love over all these years. Amen.