



Lent 4 – March 14-15-16, 2026

Preacher: Pastor Scott Oelhafen

Sermon Theme: **"LORD, Make Us CROSS-Eyed"**

Sermon Text: John 9: 1-9, 35-38

**As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" <sup>3</sup>"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup>As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup>While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." <sup>6</sup>After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. <sup>7</sup>"Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. <sup>8</sup>His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" <sup>9</sup>Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." <sup>35</sup>Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" <sup>36</sup>"Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." <sup>37</sup>Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." <sup>38</sup>Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.**

Dear Christian friends,

Ever see a young child with a patch over his eye? Kind of feel sorry for the kid, don't you? My cousin Mike had an eye issue when he was a little boy. He had to wear a patch because he was cross-eyed. His strong eye would focus on an object while his weaker eye would wander. For several hours each day, he had to wear an eye patch to correct this physical condition of being "cross-eyed." I'm happy to report he sees just fine today.

Nobody wants to be "cross-eyed" that way. It's frustrating and helpless. And yet, in today's Gospel, we'll learn a surprising fact. Jesus shows us the importance of being "cross-eyed," in a spiritual sense. I'm not talking about crossing our eyes so that we stumble down the steps or street. I'm talking about being spiritually "cross-eyed," to see our successes and failures, our joys and sorrows from the perspective of the Cross of Christ. God's Word shows us the importance of looking at life, death, and eternity from Jesus' point of view. Then, by the power of His Spirit, we will depend on Jesus for His love and forgiveness, as well as His guidance and direction. So join me as we pray: **"LORD, Make Us Cross-Eyed." Make us cross-eyed to clearly see Your purposes. And make us cross-eyed to firmly stand for your truth.**

The book of John records 9 miracles of Jesus. This is miracle number 6. In fact, John spends an entire chapter giving us all the details. Do you know WHY Jesus did

miracles? Not to show-off or be self-centered. Scripture explains: ***But these are written that you may believe<sup>1</sup> that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20:30).*** Jesus performed these miracles to prove His perfect credentials to every one watching as the perfect Son of God and qualified to our Savior from sin. And what an example of power!

We need to remember His power because problems enter our lives every day. And when problems attack us like an Iranian drone missile, we may think at first, "What did I do to deserve this?" Then, we're a lot like the disciples in our text. They wondered who sinned. Our reading begins: **As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"** At this point, the disciples saw problems only as punishment. Since they looked at life this way, they could only view God as an uncaring judge, just waiting to smite us. Don't we often do the same thing?

The devil wants us to focus on ourselves and off the cross when problems strike. As we focus on ourselves, the devil leads us to ask: *Why would a good God allow bad things to happen to good people?* If God is so good and loving, then why does He allow problems into my life? It doesn't make sense when I study enough for an A and end up with a D. It doesn't add up when I try to go to church, and yet my family still doesn't get along.

Oh, the devil just loves it when we play the WHY game. Even though God's way of doing things is totally beyond our limited logic, we're constantly tempted to demand: "Why me, why this, why now?" The devil knows that "why questions" often make us more confused and even upset with our Creator.

And it's human nature to get upset at God. It's been happening since the time of Adam and Eve who brought sin into the world. When humans are born into this world, most have the gift of physical sight. But, all of us, like the blind man and his parents, are in the same spiritual boat. We are spiritually blind in sin and unable to find our way out of our dark, damnable condition. Look at it this way. When I was little, my family took us on a trip to Kentucky's Mammoth Cave. Every been there? The park guide took us several hundred feet underground. Suddenly, the guide turned out the lights. It was so dark that I couldn't even see my hand in front of my face. Then, our guide asked if we could find our way to the surface on our own. Of course, we couldn't. No one could. Even if we had a million years, I doubt anyone could never escape unless someone turned on the lights to show us the way.

That's why Jesus came, as the Light of the World. He turned the light on for the disciples when He explained: <sup>3</sup>**"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. <sup>6</sup>After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. <sup>7</sup>"Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing (v3, 6-7).** I doubt that your family physician would suggest spit and mud as a

cure for blindness. But, that's Jesus. Jesus always surprises us. His power wasn't in the mud, or pool. His power rested in His Word. It was powerful enough to heal blindness, provide food for 5000+ men, women and children, as well as raise others from the dead. More incredible, It was powerful enough to forgive. God doesn't "take it out on us" by sending problems to punish us. Instead, He punished Jesus in our place. And His power rested in His blood which was innocently shed on the cross at Calvary in our place as the full payment for our sins.

Jesus has solved our greatest problem, the problem of our sins at His cross, once for all. Now, we pray: **LORD, Make Us Cross-Eyed.** Make us cross-eyed to clearly see Your perfect purposes. Let us look at life Your way. When God allows a problem into our lives, we can look at these obstacles as opportunities when we're spiritually CROSS-Eyed, when we see life from Jesus' point of view

Therefore, listen to these Godly guarantees to us: **in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But, when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (1 Corinthians 10:13).** In other words, each problem whether big or small that God allows in our lives will A) give glory to God as He shows His control, B) will strengthen our personal faith in Jesus, and C) will assure us of His presence and power even as we "walk through the valley of the shadow of death." We hold on to our Savior's promises, guaranteed not to disappoint us now, or in the life to come. **Yes LORD, Make Us Cross-eyed.** Make us clearly see Your perfect purposes.

Even though the man's blindness had been healed, that didn't mean his troubles were over. He still had to face some serious flack. But, His Savior was right by His side. We know that until we reach heaven, we're going to face some serious flack from the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh who will try to rip our Christian faith to shreds. When you feel like giving up, remember Jesus is by Your side too, and don't forget to pray: **LORD, Make Us Cross-eyed.** Make us firmly stand up for the truth of Your Word.

It's been said if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. The man of our text stood firm. Let's find out what happened: ***Jesus heard that they (the Pharisees) had thrown him out, and when He found him, He said: "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"*** That man had to face some serious opposition from the Pharisees, jealous enemies of Jesus. In spite of this peer pressure even to the point that the healed man was thrown out of his church, the synagogue, the healed man stood firm, as He was "cross-eyed." He knew that this Jesus was something special and testified before everyone exactly what happened. What pulled Him through? Jesus' own words. His words provided information, inspiration, and influenced the healed man's life.

First, His word provided information: *"Who is He, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in Him (v 36).* The man went to Jesus for the answers for his problems. Next, His Word provided inspiration. *Jesus answered: "You have now seen*

*him; in fact, he is the one speaking to you (v37).* The love, forgiveness, and power of Jesus radically changed His life forever. Finally, His Word provided influence. *Then the man said, "LORD, I believe," and he worshiped Him (v38).* The healed man was influenced to thank Jesus, His Savior by the thankful way he would live His life. His life now had a purpose, that he found His Savior.

You and I face many spiritual battles each day. We need to realize like Paul did: *that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12).* That's why we need to pray: **LORD Make Us Cross-eyed.** Make us cross-eyed to stand firm in the truth of Your Word.

That's why each of us needs to grow in our spiritual life to handle Satan's sneak attacks. That's why we need to come to church regularly to be fed in the Word of God which gives us God's influence.

Problems like eye troubles to the weather may happen. But, this Lenten season, may our eyes be drawn to the cross of Jesus Christ. And may we pray: LORD, Make Us Cross-Eyed. Amen.