

# A Blind Man Earns (?) His Sight

*by Bryan Gibson*

It's a very simple, straightforward account. Please read every word, very carefully.

“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing” (John 9:1-7).

Shame on Mr. Blind Man! If only he had not done anything, Jesus would have received all the glory. That's some nerve, to do just exactly what Jesus said—go to the pool of Siloam and wash the clay off his eyes. Give this blind man all the credit—he earned his sight. I know, I know, that all sounds ridiculous, but if I understand correctly the reasoning of some, that's exactly the way we should view it, because doesn't it, but according to the way some reason, this man earned his sight simply because he had to do something to be healed. Funny thing, that's not the way he saw it, not even close. “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!” (v. 30). This man gave the glory to Jesus; he knew that it was by God's power that he had been healed. Keep in mind what Jesus had said to his disciples earlier: “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him” (v. 3). Yes, this man had to do something, but his healing was still the work of God.

Now, let's think about how this relates to salvation, to baptism in particular. Jesus plainly taught that one must be baptized in order to be saved (Mark 16:16). His apostles preached the same thing (Acts 2:38). Ananias told Saul to “go wash”—to “arise and be baptized and wash away your sins” (Acts 22:16). Despite these plain instructions, some object to the necessity of baptism, because according to them, if a person has to be baptized to be saved, he is earning his salvation—in effect, saving himself. Think about the blind man again. He had to do something, but he didn't earn his sight, and he certainly didn't heal himself. Yes, a person does have to be baptized to have his sins forgiven, but he is still saved by Jesus. It is without question the work of God (please read Colossians 2:11-12). An individual can believe, repent, confess his

faith, and be baptized, but only God can forgive; only God can make alive (please read Ephesians 2:4-6). This writer has witnessed many people be baptized into Christ, but he has yet to hear someone say, after coming up from the water, "Look what I did!"