

JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

VOLUME TWO

STUDY ELEVEN

An Unusual Healing

Mark 8:22–26

Healing takes time. And the more extreme the illness, the more extreme may be the time one must wait.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

On, the frustration we feel when we live with ongoing afflictions! Week after week . . . the depression lingers. Months go by . . . the blood tests show no improvement. We pray and pray, but the chronic condition refuses to go away. We seek the Lord for relief, but relief does not come.

We know that God can do impossible things, but from the pit of our affliction, we struggle to see His plan, discern His timing, and understand His heart. Our anxious thoughts cry out, “*Please, Lord, heal me now!*”

King Solomon spoke such wisdom about God’s timing:

*For everything there is a season,
a time for every activity under heaven.
A time to be born and a time to die.
A time to plant and a time to harvest.
A time to kill and a time to heal. (Ecclesiastes 3:1–3)*

Did you notice the last four words? Healing comes in its time, in this life or the next. As much as we long for quick relief, often there’s no hurrying it along. It comes in its own time . . . and it takes time.

In Mark’s gospel, we’ve seen Jesus perform miracles right when He said the word or gave the touch. The withered hand was restored the moment the man held it out as Jesus told him (Mark 3:1–6). The wind and the waves hushed immediately at Jesus’ command, “Silence! Be still!” (4:39). Even Jairus’ little girl came back to life as soon as Jesus said, “*Talitha koum*” (5:41).



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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

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Yet in the passage for this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, the healing didn't happen instantaneously but in stages. Also, only Mark records this episode. But despite its unusual nature and unique occurrence, we'll find in its details the wisdom to deal with afflictions that won't go away—a problem we all face.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

May God open our eyes to the truth of His Word, and may it speak to us from the first century all the way to the twenty-first. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Echo this sincere prayer for insight as you open the Scriptures.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Mark recorded this healing at this point in his gospel for a reason. It comes after Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for *refusing to see* Him as the Messiah and demanding a sign. And it occurs right after Jesus confronted the disciples in the boat on the Sea of Galilee for their *inability to see* His power to meet their need for bread—after He had just miraculously fed multitudes!

Both the Pharisees and the disciples were suffering from spiritual blindness. Jesus' healing of the blind man in this passage ties together these two previous accounts with a unifying message: sometimes the faith to clearly see Jesus as Savior and Lord comes in stages.

The setting was the village of Bethsaida, approximately four miles northeast of Capernaum. Occasionally, Jesus went there to find respite (Luke 9:10). Locate the region in the maps at the back of your Bible or in the online map titled "[Ministry of Jesus](#)" at [insight.org](#).

Let's look more closely at what happened as we step back in time, from the twenty-first century to the first century, to observe this unusual healing.

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Observation: Jesus Heals a Blind Man

To begin, read [Mark 8:22–26](#) thoughtfully to find out what it says.¹ Put yourself in the place of the man in the account who can't see. What would it be like to live in total darkness? To feel the warmth of the sun on your face but never to marvel at the colors of a sunrise or feel your heart warmed by the look of affection in your loved one's eyes. But because of Jesus, all that was about to change.

The Setting of the Story—Mark 8:22

Note the conjunction “and” at the beginning of Mark 8:22 (NASB), showing that it's a continuation of the previous section about the disciples' dullness of faith. “You have eyes—can't you see?” Jesus had said to them (Mark 8:18). As they came to Bethsaida, some people brought a blind man to Him. What did they ask Jesus to do?

They bring their friend to the One who does the miracles, and they instruct Him—implore Him—to “Touch him! We've seen You touch before!”
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

The Savior and the Blind Man—Mark 8:23–26

Picture the scene in Mark 8:23. Imagine Jesus leading the man by the hand. Where did He take him? Why do you think He did this? What did Jesus ask and do? What was the man's response in 8:24?

This passage tells us he once had sight and has lost it. Otherwise, he wouldn't know what a tree looked like. He wouldn't know what an image of a man would represent. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Then, what did Jesus do to the man's eyes again in Mark 8:25? What happened? Note that in the NASB translation, "began" appears in italics, meaning the word was added by the translators and doesn't appear in the underlying Greek. Jesus healed him completely the second time He placed His hands on the man's eyes. What instruction did Jesus give him in 8:26?

I take it to mean that he was at that moment given 20/20 vision. When he saw, he also gained an understanding of everything. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: A Most Unusual Process of Healing

Apparently, Jesus planned to heal the man in stages—which was not what the people from the village expected. They assumed Jesus would heal him instantly with His first touch. How is it significant to us that Jesus defied their expectations?

*All of us tend to have expectations that may not be the plan of God.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

In Mark 8:23–25, Jesus led the blind man through a process until he saw clearly. Find the meaning of the Greek adverb *telaugos*, translated "clearly," in the Greek dictionary at biblehub.com. Look up 8:22–26 in *Constable's Notes* at netbible.org. Describe the process of the blind man's healing. Why did this miracle happen gradually? How is Jesus' healing of the blind man in stages a metaphor for growth in spiritual understanding?

*How easy it is to forget that Jesus isn't a stunt man. He doesn't traffic in the supernatural to grow crowds unlike religions of our day.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

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Correlation: The Sovereign and Great Healer

Taste the bitter water God made sweet to quench the Israelites' thirst in the wilderness. Relive the biblical account that reveals God's name *Jehovah Rapha*, "the God who heals," in [Exodus 15:22–27](#). What does this name for God say about Him? How did Jesus represent God's name, and what did that representation say about Him?

Compare our passage with [Isaiah 55:8–9](#); [2 Corinthians 5:1–18](#); and [12:1–10](#). What important truths do these passages teach believers about God's thoughts, sovereign will, and mysterious ways?

According to [Romans 12:12](#); [Philippians 4:6–7](#); [James 5:13–18](#); and [1 John 5:14–15](#), how can believers find guidance and strength in times of affliction?

How does the Lord give guidance? He'll do that through His Word. He'll do it through times of prayer. He will do this kind of thing through the inner working of the Holy Spirit. He will do it through the counsel of friends who have your good at heart and have a walk with the Lord that you admire. He will guide you in a number of ways. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Application: Trust God for Relief and Understanding!

The last step of the *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method gives you a golden opportunity to open the door of your heart and let God's truths enter. Pastor Chuck offers four pieces of advice to all who either have been through a lengthy time of healing or are now going through such a time.

First, *come to the only One who can bring healing*. Why not take time to bring your difficulty, your struggle, your trial to the Healer?

Whatever your difficulty, your struggle, your trial, come first to the Healer. Physicians are not healers; they are physicians. Get alone, pour out your heart, tell the Lord where you are, and acknowledge His right to lead you in His own way and in His own time. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Second, *go wherever He leads you*. Has the Lord been leading you to step into unknown territory? Or what doctor, wise counselor, or trusted friend has He brought to your mind who might help you?

He may be leading you to a wise counselor, one who knows Christ, one who has insight. This person can help you unravel the stuff that has brought you into such a pit of depression. Maybe a trusted friend has that ability. But go to someone who can help. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Third, *stay at it . . . regardless*. Remind yourself that you're in the hands of the Healer as you stay at it. Express your confidence in Him.

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Remember healing takes time. The process will include the unexpected. You're in the hands of the Healer. You're safe, you're secure. Stay there. Let it happen. Don't hurry. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Fourth, trust God to bring you fully into His will, whatever that may mean. What eternal truths do you sense the Holy Spirit wants you to keep in mind in this process? Note them below.

Through the process, you'll understand what you now do not understand. And that understanding will become for you wisdom. Can I add here, the more impossible it seems to you, the less difficulty God has with it. He specializes in impossibilities. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



A FINAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the Healer, the God who makes iron swim. You specialize in impossibilities. I'm in Your hands. I'm safe. I'm secure. May I always remember all that You have done in my life! May I continue to trust You! In the powerful name of Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page "*How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?*" at [insight.org](https://www.insight.org).

For the 2026–2027 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2011, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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