

## **“God Always Takes the Initiative”**

John 9:1-42

July 29, 2018

6:30 pm

**Introduction:** God always takes the initiative. We may not realize it, but God always takes the first step. In the first book in the Bible, we see God taking the initiative to talk to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8-9). God takes the initiative in prayer. Isaiah 65:24 says, “It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer.” That verse changed my understanding and appreciation for prayer. Prayer starts with God. We don’t need to get God’s attention—He wants our attention. God always begins the conversation. When we feel the need to pray, it is because God put the desire in us to pray. The Holy Spirit stirs our spirit to pray. Long before we think of praying, God is thinking of us. God always takes the first step.

The same thing is true when it comes to miracles. Just like in the Garden and just like prayer, God takes the initiative when it comes to miracles.

**A miracle is simply evidence of the supernatural. There are other definitions of a miracle, but this is a good one.**

- There are three words used in the New Testament to describe what we call miracles (evidence of the supernatural). Simon Peter used all three of the words on the day of Pentecost when he reminded the Jews of the marvelous ministry of Jesus (Acts 2:22).
  1. “Miracles” (*dunamis*) meaning powers or mighty works. This word is not found in John’s gospel.
  2. “wonders” (*teras*) means wonders. This word is used once by John in his Gospel (4:48).
  3. “Signs” (*semeion*) means a miracle with a message. It denotes a miracle with a special lesson tied to it. Not just a miracle at face value.

## **In John's Gospel, we find seven miracles.**

1. Jesus turning water into wine (2:1-11)—Jesus was there.
2. Jesus healing the Nobleman's son (4:46-54)—“Jesus came to Cana.”
3. Jesus healing the invalid man (5:1-9)—“Jesus went up to Jerusalem”.
4. Jesus feeding the 5,000 (6:1-14)—“Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee.”
5. Jesus walking on water (6:15-21)—“Jesus walking on the Sea.”
6. Jesus healing the man born blind (9:1-41)—“Jesus passed by and saw the man born blind.”
7. Jesus raising Lazarus (11:1-44)—“Jesus came to Bethany.”

The word John used for these miracles is translated into English as “signs.” We see this word used fifteen times in the Gospel of John (2:11,23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30, 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30).

The word “signs” means a miracle that has a message. Each miracle has a lesson tied to it. The miracle happened, but for a purpose in addition to the miracle itself. Each miracle is like a “visual-aid.”

**Text:** John chapter 9 has forty-one verses. The big picture of the chapter:

1. In verses 1-34, Jesus gave the man born blind physical sight.
2. In verses 35-41, Jesus gave the man born blind spiritual sight.

**Text reading:** John 9:1-7

- The crowd of Jesus that Jesus had been speaking to became furious with Jesus (8:59).
- They became so furious that they picked up stones to throw at Jesus (8:59).

- Jesus made a path through the crowd and walked out of the temple (8:59).
- The Jews believed in pre-natal sin. They believed an unborn child could sin while still in the mother's womb.
- They also believed in Parental sin. This idea is in the Old testament (Exodus 20:5; 34:7; Numbers 14:18).
- Scripture teaches that sin may be a cause of suffering (John 5:14; 1 Cor. 11:30; James 5:15).

**Jesus saw the man blind from birth, took the initiative and healed him.**

- The disciples asked Jesus a question (9:2).
- Jesus took the initiative and healed the man born blind (9:6-7).
- **God's bigger plan was to bring Christ into this man's life.**

**Illustration:** Blindness in the Bible is a metaphor for spiritual darkness (2 Cor. 4:3-6; Col. 1:12-14).

**Conclusion:** Jesus performed two miracles in John chapter 9.

1. The miracle of physical sight, but he remained spiritually blind (9:6-7).
2. The miracle of spiritual sight.

When Jesus gave the man born blind physical sight, he remained spiritually blind.

**Jesus took the initiative.**

1. He found him (9:35).
2. He initiated a conversation (9:35).
3. He revealed Himself to the man (9:37).

**Invitation:** Bill Gaither wrote a song that includes these words: “There is a long parade of miracles, and it is led by a wonderful King.”

- How true that is.
- I am one of those miracles.
- Are you?
- God has taken the initiative. The next step in your step.