

Sometimes We Need a “Second Touch”

Virtual Bible Class with Rubel Shelly | Mark 8:22-26

These questions are designed to help you go a bit deeper into the theme of last Sunday’s sermon about the two-stage healing of a blind man. It is a most unusual miracle account in the Gospels and seems designed to teach us that God is faithful to sustain and mature his people over time.

Unit 1 – Can You Recall a Time?

1. This video begins by asking about your personal spiritual experience. Is there a particular time and event when you recall God’s “second touch” to your faith?
2. In your own words, how would you distinguish what was called God’s initial act of *saving grace* from his *sustaining grace* in a believer’s life over time?
3. What was Paul’s experience of “sustaining grace” related in 2 Cor 12? What is the key idea the video emphasized about the circumstances Paul described?
4. Had you heard the acrostic before – **God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense**? What do you think of it? Using your own words, how would you define *grace*?
5. With a global pandemic, ongoing issues of racial injustice, and whatever personal challenges you are facing, end this reflection time with a prayer for God’s blessing and intervention that God’s will “be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.”

Unit 2 – The Ministry of Grace to One Another

1. Rubel grew up in a legalistic background and spoke of being a “spiritual neurotic” because of it. Do you understand his point? Is there anything similar in your background?
2. In what context did you come to appreciate the doctrine of the grace of God?
3. The video speaks of people who have gotten frustrated in their spiritual lives – even to the point of doubting their salvation. Have you ever known of that happening with someone?
4. Has the experience of the past six months created particular stress for you? How are you dealing with it? Have you found safe people with whom to share your concerns?
5. Is there someone for whom you can be a “second touch” of encouragement and hope? When and how will you reach to that person in order to serve as a minister of grace?

Unit 3 – Going Deeper into the Gospel of Mark

1. Do you understand the term “acted parable” as it is used in the video? Can you put the idea into your own words?
2. Did the experience and teaching of Mark 8 solve the problem of “fuzzy understanding” among Jesus’ disciples?
3. What expectation did the disciples have of how Israel’s Messiah would function? How did that expectation cloud their ability to understand Jesus’ prediction of his death?
4. The same question is asked in two different settings at 10:36 and 10:51. What is the question? How did James and John answer? Bartimaeus? What is the difference in those two replies?
5. The video ends by claiming that Christ’s *presence* is a greater gift than our *understanding* of key ideas or confusing events. What do you understand that to mean? Do you agree?