***John 9:8-11 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?” 9Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.” He said, “I am he.” 10Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?” 11He answered and said, “A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and I received sight.”***

We’re with Jesus this morning as He fulfills yet another of the Old Testament prophecies. In Isaiah 35:5-6 *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing.* Isaiah, writing 700 years before Christ, prophesied of the coming Messiah Jesus and the miracles He’d bring. Lest we believe that someone altered the book of Isaiah to fit the narrative of Jesus, the earliest text of this book is dated to 356 BC, 356 years before the miracle we’re reading of today.

As John 8 closes, Jesus is passing out of the Temple. His enemies are taking up stones to kill Him! Notice, He is not running for His life! This is the same Sabbath day that leaves me tired when I think that He forgave the woman caught in adultery, rebuked the Pharisees, confirmed that He is the living Word of God, and is threatened with stoning. The wording John 9:1 implies that Jesus sees the blind man as He is leaving the Temple. The compassion! The love! People seek to kill Him, and He notices a blind man begging by the road. This is the Christ we serve! How beautiful His love and He directs His gaze at us!

We know the story. Jesus sees the man. The disciples ask who sinned causing his blindness. Jesus answers that it is for God’s glory. He makes clay of dirt and saliva and anoints the man’s eyes, instructing him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. The pool of Siloam is the place of ritual cleansing and starting point of the pilgrimage up the hill to the Temple Mount. This should not be lost on us! This man starts his pilgrimage to knowing Jesus, our High Priest, washing in the pool of Siloam.

Verse 8 & 9 - *Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?” 9Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.” He said, “I am he.”* A miracle of this magnitude has happened. God has acted. No one says right away – “Praise God!” No – the man was as unseen as he was unseeing. Said a different way – The people no more saw the blind man than the blind man saw the people! He was a nuisance along the way, someone to look away from. The neighbors can’t even agree if it’s him. He was unseeing by no fault of his own. He was unseen by choice.

We unsee people all the time. Who is unseen along our pathway? Is it a face on the corner by the stoplight? Is it a neighbor we don’t agree with? Is it someone new at work? Jesus saw this man, even as He left a chaotic situation. He really saw this man that others did not see. In our world, we’re given opportunities to see those others do not see. Perhaps a teen that needs attention. Perhaps a mother that needs help, a father that needs encouragement, a senior that needs companionship. May the Lord open our eyes to the unseen, so we really see!

Verse 10*Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?”* They don’t ask Who opened your eyes, but in what way were your eyes opened? Still, no “Praise God! This is a miracle!” Nothing hints that they’re overjoyed for him. He’s still the unknown beggar by the side of the road. It begs the question – how excited are we for a brother or sister made to see?

Verse 11 *He answered and said, “A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me,‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’So I went and washed, and I received sight.”* Jewish tradition calls the pool of Siloam the Messiah’s pool. Interesting. This pool - created by King Hezekiah, restored in Nehemiah, improved by Herod the Great, destroyed by the Romans. Rediscovered in 2004. The beggar has met the Man called Jesus. His pilgrimage and growth in Jesus Christ – crossing for knowing the Man to knowing the Messiah – starts with a cleansing in the Messiah’s Pool. Much like the start of our walk starts with baptism. His Faith made him well. Had he failed to follow Jesus’ command, he’d have been a beggar, with dirty eyelids, still unseeing and still unseen. Jesus said Go. He went. His sight was received.

Likewise, Jesus sees us, knows us, anoints us with His word, offers us healing, tells us to believe and be cleansed. But we must go. We must follow, in Faith, the Messiah Jesus. We must bathe in the Living Water He offers.

In John 9:30 – this same man is faced with being cast out of the Temple. He’ll become a social outcast from the world, hated by those that should have seen the miracle. When challenged, this is his answer to those that still do not see him and are still blind to Jesus. *The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!”* Jesus sees him a little later and the man believes in the Lord. Truly his eyes have been opened – physically yes, but more importantly spiritually to the Truth.

This week, consider the unseen. How might we see them and help them see Jesus? Have we bathed in the Messiah’s pool, drank from His cup, confirmed our Faith, and now walk by the Savior’s side? If you’ve not met the Messiah Jesus, come today as we sing. Our journey starts when we receive our cleansing from Him.