**God Works by Giving**

**(Giving Series Part 1)**

 *As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.****2****And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”****3****Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.****4****We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.****5****As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”****6****Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud****7****and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. (John 9:1-7, ESV)*

 Jesus gives us light to see, because we would not be able to see Him and accept Him, otherwise. Greetings dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as we bring forward the first topic of three in our new sermon series, which is focused on the theme of “giving”. God, through Jesus, worked by giving. Within this episode, a miracle had taken place: and that was an act of giving to the blind man. Today, therefore, we’re going to talk about the above important topic, specifically about light, seeing, and related topics. Again, I say, Jesus gives us his light, so that we can see Him and even more, accept Him into our lives. Let’s talk, then, about this great gift of sight…

 Jesus gives us His light – and He does it so that we can give light to others also. Within this episode, we can see that the disciples needed illumination of their minds by Jesus. They believed without exception, that the blind man’s status was there because of sin. There was no possibility in their thoughts for any other source of the disability because it had been some time that the Jewish religious leaders had been teaching that limited and absolute understanding exclusively. Jesus, in saying what he did, gave light to the disciples darkened and limited convictions. He was saying that sometimes, sickness neither comes from personal sin nor generational transgressions. Rather, sometimes a sickness or disability is present for God’s work (i.e., miracle) to be revealed. Jesus was going to do those works until He would ascend to the Father, and then continue through the Holy Spirit. In addition, so that Jesus’ light would not be constrained to the spiritual and knowledge realms, the Lord Jesus gave physical sight to the blind man. The Lord gave light in two ways: both mental illumination and light to the eyes (healing of vision).

 Sometimes, when a relative visits us, it is a gift just to enjoy that person’s presence. It is not necessary that there be a significant gift from them, or for a great event to be held because of their arrival. A visit becomes an act of giving when one’s presence and time is shared with the family that is visited.

 Jesus gave His disciples light. He also gave sight to the blind man. Yes, it is true that they were simply to receive those gifts – but it does get me thinking: if Jesus gave unceasingly during his ministry, what does each of our ministries look like? First, do we receive the light Christ gives us? If we do, and if Jesus was always giving as He ministered, how do we, in turn, serve the Lord? Do we have a habit or lifestyle of giving from our time, faith, and treasure? Given that the church is the expression and resulting presence of our corporate faith, how much of our service is characterized by giving? What do we give in the church? Do we give our leftover time or few cents? Or do we give to the Lord our best, be it our best talent, our best gift, our greatest amount of time? The Lord illuminated us with His knowledge and miracles. The Lord gave us new light to be able to see so that we, in turn, would be able to give light to others, to give them the light of Christ, through our service. Jesus gives us His light – and He does it so that we can give light to others also.

 May God help us to give to others the light that we have received from Him, so that the lifestyle of giving and sacrificing become established within us, and that the Church would be blessed by it. The Lord Bless You All. Amen.