

March 22, 2023

Amazing Grace in Action

[John 9:1-41](#)

He answered, I do not now whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see (John 9:25)

When I was a junior in high school, a friend invited me to her church. I went that Sunday, and the next, and never stopped. I always remember being a person of faith, and I remember being baptized as a child, but I had never had an experience like the UMYF would give me.

Among other ministries, our group spearheaded the “tape ministry” for the church. Youth copied the service onto cassette tapes and delivered them each week to those we called “shut ins.” Twice a year we would go as a group and visit all of the shut-ins. I particularly remember going in one day to about 20 different homes, and joining as the youth sang *Amazing Grace* with each person we visited.

In this chapter of John, Jesus heals a blind man. He does so in a way that alarms the religious leaders because they think Jesus has broken the Sabbath.

They call the man to testify about what happened to him. “I was blind; now I see.”

Jesus healed a physical problem the man had had since birth, but Jesus also brings him to faith. If you read the entire passage, and pay special attention to the way the healed man referred to Jesus, you can see that at first he called Jesus a man, then a prophet, then a man from God, and finally he tells Jesus, “Lord, I believe.” Amazing grace in action.

Verse 25 of the 9th chapter of John is said to be the basis of the lyrics of the hymn *Amazing Grace*. The lyrics were written by John Newton, who was involved in the Atlantic slave trade. One day, a terrible storm threatened his ship, and he prayed to God for mercy. Eleven hours later, they were safe from the storm.

He considered this his spiritual conversion, and though he didn’t end his work in the slave trade immediately, he did eventually change his life. I imagine if asked, his words for Jesus would have echoed the healed man’s words: a man, a prophet, a man from God, and then Lord. Amazing grace in action.

I know I wasn’t blind to God before a friend invited me to church, but her invitation started me on a path that would not just change my life, but shape it into what it has become. I believed in God, but until I was a junior in high school, I didn’t understand what it meant to belong to a faith community – to find support and hope through other members of the church and to reach out to the world in service.

Amazing grace in action. How have you experienced God’s amazing grace? Who can you invite to join you?

Prayer: *Surround us with your grace and move us to invite others to join us. Amen.*

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