

41-10-01.wpd --When the Blind Man Cries
helplessness, prayer, healing, discipleship
Mark 10:46-52

God heals our spiritual blindness when He knows we really want to see.

INTRODUCTION (text as Scripture reading)

--Jesus healed multitudes, but a crowd is made up of individuals with names (Bartimaeus, Mary, Lazarus) each with their own story.

--Matthew reports two blind men (Matt.20:29-34): Mark focused on Bartimaeus who was evidently well-known by everyone (for his begging, or his excelling later in following Christ?)

--The Holy Spirit is in charge of what stories get into Scripture; this one is here because it holds a definite lesson for us all: **HOM.idea**.

I. A Powerless Condition, v.46

- A. A picture of spiritual blindness, "a blind man, Bartimaeus"-- 2 Cor 4:4,
The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
1. Lies can blind us to danger [liquid bleach in a eyedrop container...]
 2. False beliefs lead us into the danger of missing spiritual truth:
 - a. Skepticism about Jesus being "God with us."
 - b. Rejecting Jesus is the only way to God-- John 14:6, Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. [C.S. Lewis' 3 options: liar, insane, or real].
- B. The poverty of spiritual blindness: "by the roadside begging"
1. The spiritually blind are destitute of spiritual hope-- Eph 2:12, remember that at that time you were *separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope* and without God in the world. (They fail to see that the good news about Jesus, the concept of heavenly citizenship, and God's gracious promises are FOR THEM!)
 2. The spiritually blind are destitute of spiritual help---they may join with others in the same condition, but they are still blind [like Bartimaeus and his friend, mentioned in Matthew].

TRANS: People "without hope and without God in the world" may enjoy companionship with others who are also spiritually blind. They may form groups or clubs to support the each other in their blindness, BUT

they cannot create the light they need (*the blind cannot lead the blind*). Bartimaeus realized his need for help and reached out for it... with...

II. A Prayerful Courage

- A. During a passing opportunity ("As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city")
1. When does Christ come near to us?
 - a. Through reading the Word (He is *the Word*)
 - b. Through Gospel preaching (He still *sends prophets*)
 - c. Through a friend's witness (He *indwells believers*)
 2. What is our response to His approach?-- v.47, *When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"* (Do we have the same enthusiasm as Bartimaeus?)
 - a. He could have continued a life of begging-- [The homeless man in the ER who refused a place to stay, because he'd have to do chores there.]
 - b. What he did do was switch the direction of his begging:
 - (1) (He already began seeing)... seeing how transitory human resources were... seeing how God is the primary resource.
 - (2) Spiritual blindness starts lifting when we see God as our hope (discovering the hope in the Incarnation, "God with us")
- B. Meeting opposition-- v.48a, *Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet*
1. Satan opposes our crying out to the Lord for mercy:
 - a. Because it will end his dominion over us-- Joel 2:23a, everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.
 - b. Because it brings justification with God (the Pharisee and tax collector-- Lu 18:11-14, "the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God." (Satan wants to keep us feeling condemned.)
 2. Satan uses different means to quiet us from calling out:
 - a. The rebuke of others: "*God won't bother with the likes of you!*"
 - b. The rebuke of our own heart: "*I am not worthy!*"

TRANS: Our powerless condition in sin renders us spiritually blind. When we *cry out* for healing, we may meet opposition. But Bartimaeus, in v.48b, "*shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"*" So must we all *shout all the more*, shouting above condemning voices, shouting *with prayerful courage*, until, like blind Bartimaeus we reach the place of...

Personal Communion with Christ, v.49, Jesus...said, "Call him."

C. What attitudes give prayer its power? v.50, *Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.*

1. He expected an answer (*his unrestrained calling*)
2. He believed he would be healed (*throwing his cloak aside*)
3. He obeyed Jesus immediately (*jumped to his feet and came*)

D. What mercy do we want from God? v.51, *"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. God tests faith by asking for specifics:*

1. We sometimes ask only for what we know is possible.
2. God-sized requests come from a God-shaped faith.

TRANS: *God heals our spiritual blindness when He knows we really want to see.. He is waiting to hear from our lips the words of the hymn "Open My Eyes That I May See." Only then can He give us...*

III. A Perfect Cure, v.52, "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you."

Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

- A. Christ calls us to a new vision: "Go" (*Mission is the destiny of all believers-- John 20:21, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*)
- B. Christ corrects the vision of our faith, to heal the *blind spots* in our thinking that need God's perspective.
- C. Christ must become the focus of our vision--
 1. When Bartimaeus *"received his sight,"* his eyes were first on Jesus.
 - a. Healing of our spiritual sight puts Jesus immediately in view.
 - b. In the light of Christ, we see who we are really meant to be.
 2. With his eyes healed, Bartimaeus "followed Jesus along the road."
 - a. To follow Christ, we must keep our eyes open and on Him.
 - b. Jesus is still going places "along the road" (along the road of life)
 - (1) What is the road's direction? (In the service of others!)
 - (2) Where is He going exactly? (We find out by following!)

CONCLUSION:

--What happened to the other blind man Matthew mentions, who was also healed? It's a profound tragedy to receive spiritual enlightenment and not to continue following Jesus Christ, the true Source of Light.

--**Christ heals our spiritual blindness when He knows we really want to see.** If we have truly had our eyes spiritually opened, let's keep them on our Healer and follow Him wherever He leads.

Mark 10:46-52 (NIV) Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. {47} When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" {48} Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" {49} Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." {50} Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. {51} "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." {52} "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.