
The Healing Of Blind Bartimaeus

Matthew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43

Jesus is walking toward **Jerusalem** to do what He came to do, lay down His life upon the cross. The **disciples** along with a multitude are with Him (**Matthew 20:29; Mark 10:46**). This multitude is following **Jesus** to **Jerusalem** for the purpose of observing the **Jewish Passover**, and no doubt the multitude was growing the further they walked. It was in route to **Jerusalem** that a **miraculous healing of blindness took place!** **Matthew**, **Mark**, and **Luke** all record this particular miracle. **Matthew** wrote of two men who were healed (**Matthew 20:30**) while **Mark** and **Luke** only speak of one that was healed. **Mark** gives the name of one that was healed (**Mark 10:46**). Without a doubt, there were two men healed, and **Bartimaeus** was the more noticeable of the two. **Matthew** and **Mark** record that the miracle took place when **Jesus** left **Jericho** (**Matthew 20:29; Mark 10:46**), and **Luke** records that the miracle took place when **Jesus** approached **Jericho** (**Luke 18:35**). Following this; **Jesus** passed through **Jericho** and saved **Zacchaeus** (**Luke 19**). **Jericho** was the first city taken by **Joshua** who destroyed it, and pronounced a curse on anyone who should rebuild it (**Joshua 6:20-21**). About **500** years later it was rebuilt in the days of **Ahab** (**I Kings 16:34**). The apparent discrepancy between the account of **Matthew** and **Mark**, and the account of **Luke** is explained by the fact that there was an old **Jericho** (where the city use to be) and a new **Jericho** (the rebuilt city). **Jesus** was leaving old **Jericho** (**Matthew & Mark**) and approaching new **Jericho** (**Luke**) when the miracle took place.

Again, only **Mark** gives a name of one of the two that were healed; "**Bartimaeus**" and this is the only time that his name appears in the **Word of God**. The only information concerning "**Bartimaeus**" must be gathered from this miraculous event. It is from this one event from the life of "**Bartimaeus**" that there is much instruction, hope, and encouragement for both the **unsaved** and the **saved!** In **Mark's** account there is quite a contrast between "**Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging**" (**verse 46**) and "**he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way**" (**verse 52**). **BARTIMAEUS WENT FROM SITTING ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD TO WALKING WITH JESUS IN THE WAY!** He went from **blindness to sight!** He went from **misery to joy!** **HE WENT FROM DEPENDING UPON SPARE CHANGE TO DEPENDING ON JESUS!** He went from mere **survival** to **thriving!** Between **verses 46** and **52** of **Mark's** account; the condition of "**Bartimaeus**" was drastically changed, and as a result **there was a change in the way that he lived!** What is between the fact; "**blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging**" and the fact that he "**followed**

Jesus in the way” is the fact of **A REAL AND PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST!**

The record of this miracle provides a word picture of the condition of the **unsaved** sinner, and the **hope** and **possibility** that exists for them through a personal encounter with **Jesus Christ**. It also serves as a picture of the condition that even the **saved** can slip into (*sitting by the roadside begging, living on spare change, rather than the abundant life*), and the only escape from such a condition, being a personal encounter with **Jesus Christ!**

I. THE CONDITION OF BARTIMAEUS

① **He Was Blind:**

Matthew writes; “*two blind men*” (20:30), and **Mark** writes; “*blind Bartimaeus*” (10:46), and **Luke** writes; “*a certain blind man*” (18:35). We are not told for how long he had been blind, but long enough to be known as “*blind Bartimaeus*” Those words are descriptive of both his condition and situation. he was a man who lived in **darkness!** Every single day he would have to feel his way around! **There was no clarity in his life, his was a life of obscurity!** Due to his blindness there no doubt were many **difficulties** in his life that others did not have, and difficulties that were common to others, were even more difficult for him! Due to his blindness there was a degree of **confusion** and **perplexity** in his life! Due to his blindness, no doubt, there was some **stumbling** in his life, he would stumble where others would not. Without a doubt, his blindness brought some **danger**, some **hazard**, and some **risk** into his life, along with some **fear** that others did not have. His blindness would result in some **instability** and **insecurity** in his life. His condition of blindness no doubt **robbed him of some joy**, and **robbed him of some experiences in life!**

② **He Was Poverty Stricken:**

Mark and **Luke** both record that he “*sat.....begging*” (**Mark 10:46; Luke 18:35**). This is indicative of the fact that he was a man with many **limitations**, **deficiencies**, and **problems!** **He was a pauper and begging was his business!** **HE WAS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE ECONOMIC LADDER WITH NO PROSPECT FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE!** **Bartimaeus** would sit on the side of the road all day long **with his hand out, begging and pleading with the passer-byes!**

③ **His Was A Life Of Gloom And Routine:**

Bartimaeus had all that was included in **blindness** and all that was included in **poverty!** He appears to be quite **helpless**, and his situation appears to be utterly **hopeless!** In those words “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” **IS A MAN TRAPPED IN HIS LIFE!** Those words “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” **DOES NOT DIPICT A MAN THAT IS GLOWING IN RADIANCE!** Oh, perhaps, he smiled with gratefulness every time someone gave him a coin, and

that he found some joy and happiness in the alms that he received, BUT IT NEVER LASTED, for not a single coin changed his real condition! AND THE NEXT DAY THERE HE WOULD SIT ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD IN DARKNESS, JUST TRYING TO SURVIVE! The day would change, but with every changing day “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” The seasons would change but with every changing season “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” This is a picture of loneliness, sorrow, misery, distress, and meager living! Every day he awoke, and remained blind, and poor! EVERYDAY, HE WOULD BE FORCED TO DEAL WITH THE DIFFICULTIES OF HIS CONDITION! His entire life was affected by his blindness and poverty! HIS CONDITION DICTATED THE WAY HE LIVED HIS LIFE! And to some degree he became accustomed to his condition, to his situation.

II. THERE WAS AN ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST

① All Was Not Hopeless:

Again, in **Mark's** account it reads; “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” There he is in the darkness of blindness, and in the nothingness of poverty with his hand out BEGGING AND PLEADING WITH THE PASSER-BYES, JUST TRYING TO SURVIVE ANOTHER DAY! And he could hear that there were more people than usual, and that it was noisier than usual, and that there was an excitement in the air, he could sense that something was happening, and **Luke**, in his account (**18:36**) says “*And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant?*” And in **Luke 18:37** they answered “*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by*” JESUS HAD COME TO THE PLACE WHERE BARTIMAEUS WAS!

○ This Is Wonderful Because Of Who Jesus Is:

He is **God**, the **Creator** and **Sustainer** of all! He is the **Almighty**, the **possessor of all power in heaven and earth**! He is **Omniscient**! He is **King of kings**, and **Lord** of all! He is the one and only **Savior**! He is the one and only **Way** to **God**! He is the one and only **Door** into the blessings of **God**, the one and only **Mediator** between **God** and man! He is the **Greatest** of all! He is **Above** and **Beyond** all! He is **Everything**! That day, like every day “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” There he sits in darkness, and destitution desperately needing a miracle in his life, AND JESUS CAME WHERE HE WAS! Oh, the possibilities that existed because **Jesus was there!**

○ This Is Wonderful Because Of What There Is In Him:

“*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by*” and in Him is the **forgiveness** that every sinner needs! In Him is the **righteousness**, the **redemption**, the **reconciliation**, and the **acceptance** that every sinner needs! That day, like every day “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” but the One who has everything that he so desperately needs has come to the place! **Wonderful possibilities existed because Jesus was there!**

○ *This Is Wonderful Because Of What Jesus Does:*

“Jesus of Nazareth passeth by” JESUS HAD COME TO THE PLACE! All through the **Gospels**, it is recorded WHAT A DIFFERENCE THIS MAKES! Places of **DEATH** become places of **LIFE!** Places of **DARKNESS** become places of **LIGHT!** Places of **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS** become places of **RIGHTEOUSNESS!** Places of **NEED** become places of **PROVISION!** Places of **THIRST** become places of **REFRESHMENT!** Places of **BROKENNESS** become places of **MENDING!** Places of **HURT** become places of **HEALING!** Places of **HOPELESSNESS** become places of **HOPE!** Places of **HELPLESSNESS** become places of **HELP!** Places of **WEAKNESS** become places of **STRENGTH!** Places of **DISTRESS** become places of **COMFORT!** Places of **ANGUISH** become places of **RELIEF!** Places of **AFFLICTION** become places of **SOLACE!** Places of **SORROW** become places of **JOY!** Places of **FEAR** become places of **COURAGE,** and places of **DEFEAT** become places of **VICTORY!** That day, like every day *“blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging”* but **Jesus** came to where **Bartimaeus** was, and now wonderful possibilities existed! *“Jesus of Nazareth passeth by”* THESE ARE WORDS OF GRACE AND MERCY!

② ***Bartimaeus Believed That Jesus Was Able To Fix His Life:***

When **Bartimaeus** heard that **Jesus** was there, **hope** filled his heart, for he had previously heard how that **Jesus** had so **graciously** and **mercifully** healed others AND HE BELIEVED THAT JESUS COULD HEAL HIM AND CHANGE HIS ENTIRE SITUATION! HE BELIEVED THAT **JESUS WAS THE SOLUTION!**

③ ***Bartimaeus Cried Out In Desperation:***

There sits **Bartimaeus** on the side of the road, in **darkness**, in **destitution**, in **misery** a **blind** street **beggar**, desperately needing **mending healing**, and **restoring**, desperately needing a **change** in his life, and he hears that *“Jesus of Nazareth passeth by”* and he immediately cries out (**Mark 10:47; Luke 18:38**). THIS WAS THE CRY OF ONE DESPERATELY **NEEDING AND WANTING DELIVERANCE!** **Jesus comes to the place and BARTIMAEUS CEASES TO PLEAD WITH THE PASSER-BYES,** but **fervently and passionately He pleads for Jesus!** When he began to cry out, **he did not receive any encouragement from the people (Matthew 20:31; Mark 10:48; Luke 18:39).** It was as if they said; *“Bartimaeus, such a man as Jesus is not interested in you, you are nothing but a blind street beggar. Quit acting like a fool, and be content with the donations that you have already received today”* And then it is recorded *“he cried out the more a great deal, Thou Son of David have mercy on me”* No one told him to repeat those words, and he did not need a prayer book! **It was his sense of need and the belief that Jesus was able that supplied him with the words!**

④ ***The Response Of Jesus:***

The people are thronging **Jesus**, there is great excitement and commotion, a cry rings out from the side of the road *“Jesus, thou son of David have mercy on me”* **Jesus**

walks on, but the plea comes again, this time **louder**, more **urgent**, more **desperate** and **passionate**, and **Matthew, Mark, and Luke** all record that “**Jesus stood still**” (**Matthew 20:32; Mark 10:49; Luke 18:40**). One solitary, helpless soul, one insignificant blind beggar on the side of the road pleading for mercy, looking to Him for help, and “**Jesus stood still**” **ready, willing, and able** to do for **Bartimaeus!** “**Jesus stood still**” **not because of a beautiful hymn that was sung, not because of some wonderful discourse, BUT BECAUSE OF A CRY FROM A BURDENED AND DESIROUS HEART! “Jesus stood still” BECAUSE OF A HUMBLE CRY FOR MERCY! BECAUSE OF A CRY OF FAITH!** **Jesus** standing still, said to the people concerning **Bartimaeus** “**call him, tell him to come to me**” (**Mark 10:49**). The people go to **Bartimaeus** and say “**Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee**” (**Mark 10:49**). **Jesus**, the **remedy** and **solution** to man’s greatest problem, and the **provision** for man’s greatest need, the **restorer** of ruined and wrecked lives **CAME TO WHERE BARTIMAEUS WAS STUCK AND CALLED HIM TO COME!**

5 **The Response Of Bartimaeus:**

Bartimaeus **knew** and keenly **felt** his **blindness** and **destitution**, and he fully believed that **Jesus** who had come to the place where he was, was fully able to **deliver** him, and **rectify** his life, **OH, THE HOPE AND JOY THAT FILLED HIS HEART WHEN HE HEARD “he calleth thee”** It is then recorded concerning **Bartimaeus**; “**And he casting away his garment**” (**Mark 10:50**). That “**garment**” was symbolic of the **lifestyle** of a blind beggar, symbolic of the **securities** and **comforts** of that life, no longer feeling a need for this **HE CAST IT AWAY!** The next thing that we read is that he “**rose**” that is, **HE STOOD UP “and came to Jesus”** Without any hesitation **HE LEFT WHERE HE WAS AND CAME!** **He left his garment , and he left whatever coins he had collected that day!** The reason that many continue to live a life of spiritual **darkness**, a life of spiritual **destitution**, a life of **stumbling, confusion, perplexity, fear, instability, and insecurity** is because **THEY CLING TO THE THINGS OF THAT LIFE, REFUSING TO LET GO, AND THEY NEVER LEAVE WHERE THEY ARE!** **Bartimaeus**, having come to **Christ**, was asked by **Christ**; “**What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?**” (**Mark 10:51**). **Bartimaeus**, realizing the root of his problem said; “**Lord, that I might receive my sight**” (**Mark 10:51**). He pleaded with the people for money (*temporary relief, knowing that was all they could give*), **but when Jesus came to the place, he got to the root of his problem, knowing that Jesus and He alone could get to the root of the matter!**

III. THE LIFE THAT EXISTS BECAUSE OF JESUS

1 **Bartimaeus Received Sight:**

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record this (**Matthew 20:34; Mark 10:52; Luke 18:43**). **Mark** adds that **Bartimaeus** was “**made.....whole**” (**Mark 10:52**). **BARTIMAEUS WAS MADE COMPLETE!**

② **The Life Of Bartimaeus Was Changed:**

Matthew records; “and immediately their eyes received sight, and **they followed Him**” (**Matthew 20:34**). **Mark** records; “And immediately he received his sight, and **followed Jesus in the way**” (**Mark 10:52**). **Luke** records; “And immediately he received his sight, and **followed Him, glorifying God**” (**Luke 18:43**). This is quite a change from “*blind Bartimaeus.....sat by the highway side begging*” THIS SPEAKS OF THE LIFE THAT IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF JESUS! He “*followed Jesus in the way*” (**Mark 10:52**), whatever way that way took! To “*follow Jesus*” is to **draw close to Him**, to **serve Him**, to be **separated unto Him**, for **Him to have the preeminence**, it is to **imitate Him**, to be **committed to Him**, to **focus upon Him**, and to **trust Him**! He “*followed Jesus in the way*” and he saw the triumphal entry of **Christ** into **Jerusalem**, and perhaps he saw the risen and victorious **Christ**, but one thing for sure, **BECAUSE OF A PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST, LIFE WAS BETTER FOR BARTIMAEUS!**

Bartimaeus went from sitting on the side of the road in **darkness** and **destitution** to walking with **Jesus in the way**! **His way of living and his entire outlook had been changed! He never went back to that roadside, His life was new! SUCH MARVELS JESUS IS STILL ABLE TO PERFORM!**
