

Blind Beggar Bart

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[0 : 00] So I know when I hear that, they're talking about that other guy, the dead Spurgeon, who's more alive than we are, actually. I said, I've heard of you. You're that author, aren't you?

And I went, yes. As a matter of fact, have you read my latest? And I gave him a track. Amen. Praise the Lord. Friday night, no place I'd rather be.

I never stayed home Friday night when I was lost. I'm glad I don't have to now that I'm saved. Get to be in church. Appreciate you showing your priorities by coming here tonight.

Some people have a hard time doing that. And, well, whatever. That's not my business. But I want to say again, I'm glad you're here. Heard this recently at a meeting. George Bush, George W. Bush, the one that was the president, he was, or his son, he was at the, he was at an airport.

And he saw a guy, a guy, an old guy, long white hair, long white beard, kind of in a robe with a staff. And he was kind of standing over by the window looking up in the sky.

[1 : 13] And he said, man, that really looks like Moses. And he couldn't shake it. And he went over to him and he said, he said, excuse me, sir, are you Moses? And the guy didn't even acknowledge him.

He just kept looking up in the sky. And he said, please, I got to know, you look like Moses. Are you Moses? And the guy just ignored him. And he was, he was, they kept badgering him.

And he said, sir, sir. And the guy looked down at him. He said, yeah, I'm Moses. And he said, wow, I thought that was you. Let me ask you. I asked you, I had to ask you three times for you to acknowledge that you're Moses.

Why? And he said, last time I talked to a bush, I walked around in the wilderness for 40 years. Is that terrible? Pretty good. Vince Massa said, I know you know it.

I just want to let you know. Take your Bible tonight. Go to Matthew chapter. Feel free to use that, Randy. I know you're impressed. You're trying to hold your enthusiasm down. Matthew chapter 20.

[2 : 18] We'll start there. Matthew chapter 20. And we'll get a couple of verses. A verse, at least one. I don't remember. The longer I work on something, the more I forget what I'm doing.

So Matthew chapter 20. I believe we want verse 30. Yeah. Matthew chapter 20, verse 30. The Bible says this, and behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside.

When they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. What I want to point out is that it says two blind men.

Take your Bible, go to Mark chapter 10. Look at verse 46. Mark chapter 10, verse 46.

The Bible said, and they came to Jericho, and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus. The son of Timaeus, sat by the high roadside begging.

[3 : 29] Go to Luke chapter 18. Luke chapter 18. Luke chapter 18, verse 35.

And it says this, and it came to pass that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside begging.

So obviously tonight we're talking about who we refer to as blind Bartimaeus. I want to preach on him. I titled the message, Blind Beggar Bart.

But he's not really blind. That's not even accurate anymore. But he was then. And the reason we read those other three passages is because of your four gospels. Three of them we just saw record this account of Bartimaeus receiving his sight.

John doesn't mention that at all. John's on higher ground, to tell you the truth, in a lot of ways. But Matthew, Mark, and Luke all mention them. We're going to be looking at Luke's, a verse out of Luke's account tonight.

[4 : 42] But I want to point out, in Matthew, it says there were two men. That's no contradiction. When it talks about the maniac Gadara in Mark 5 and Luke 8, it mentions the one guy.

But Matthew chapter 8 mentions that there's two. And so from Matthew's viewpoint, that was significant detail to add. And that's fine.

I got thinking about that, why Matthew's always the one that's got a different number. And it's simply because. Remember, he was a tax man. He's into numbers.

Amen. Boy, I got a call. I'd mention the, yeah, the IRS. We won't go there. But I got thinking about that. And so Matthew, he's a detail guy. That's all he tells us.

That's different. Mark mentions only one and deals with the one. But he gives us his name. That's why we know his name, Bartimaeus. Amen.

[5 : 45] Luke doesn't even mention his name. But goes on and tells pretty much the same thing. We'll pick it up in verse 36, Luke chapter 18. And it says, And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passed by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace. But he cried out so much the more. I think he had some Irish in him or something. And he cried out so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought unto him. And when he was come near, he asked him, saying, verse 41, saying, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?

And he said, Lord. Boy, that is the way to approach the king. Right there. And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

[6 : 52] Verse 43. Well, we'll read to verse 42. It said, And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight. He healed him. Jesus healed a lot of people. But he says this right here. He says, Thy faith hath saved thee.

And I think that has a lot to do with that by recognizing who he was. And he recognized who he was. And he called him Lord. Verse 43 is where we'll get our outline tonight.

It says, And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

Dear Lord, you are certainly worthy of our praise for the great and mighty things that you do. And thank you, God, for bringing us out here tonight and the privilege to still assemble freely like we can. And I pray that you meet with us tonight. I pray you'd help me say something from your book. My opinion don't mean much, but your opinion means everything. I pray you'd help me say something that'd be a blessing to you and to your people that have come.

[8 : 00] And you know the needs here tonight. No, I don't. But I know you can meet them. And I pray that they would let you, whatever that is, saved or lost, hurting or in a valley or on a mountain, whatever that cause, whatever the need, God, may you manifest yourself in a very real way here tonight.

And I'll sure thank you for that. In Jesus Christ's name, amen and amen. All right. So again, verse 43, we're going to get a couple things out of that verse.

And it starts out with these words. It says, let me get it. And immediately, he received his sight. Immediately, at the word of Jesus Christ, he just said, receive thy sight. Bingo. That's it. That's all there was to it. He didn't begin consultation with an ophthalmologist and, you know, do phone tag, trying to get an appointment, things like that.

We have to do to get it, to see a doctor, let alone get anything done like this. He didn't have to wait for an okay. How many have, maybe had it happen to themselves or know of somebody that going through the system and had to make sure the next procedure or something that needed to be done was okayed by their insurance company?

[9 : 24] And I've seen people wait and wait after a doctor said, you need this, now we got to see who's going to pay for it. None of that's going on here. I'll tell you something else. He didn't even have to wait for a certain disciple to come by and lay hands on him like Saul did.

Over in Acts chapter 9, Saul was a seeing persecutor of the church of Jesus Christ, blinded, when the Lord appeared unto him, told to go into the city and wait and a man named Mananias would come and lay hands on him.

Well, that's a miracle in and of itself. That didn't happen here. It says immediately he received his sight. I don't know about you, but I started thinking about what it would be like to be blind and to see for the first time.

To see things that we take for granted like color. My wife got saved 23 years old. She's educated, very professional young lady, but had enough honesty within herself to admit something was missing.

And in a pursuit to find what was missing, the Lord led her to a Christian bookstore where the guy gave her, the guy that owned the bookstore gave her a book on prophecy.

[10:45] That was the rage in the mid-70s and it happened to be the Revelation commentary by Peter Ruckman. And she read it and got saved. Amen. And here she'll give testimony of the fact that and she was, like I say, educated, had a good job, had a home, pedigree dogs, a Corvette, all this at 23 years old.

And she said, when I got saved, it was like going from, my life went from black and white to living color. She let the law school know that she'd been accepted into, that she wouldn't be coming, that she never went back to work in the field.

She is a rehabilitative counselor, master, and she went to work at a little Bible institute on the backside of nowhere for 25 years, sending out texts, tests, and cassette tapes, and decided to live for God.

Why? Because the things that were important when her world was black and white weren't important anymore. And the Lord, buddy, I'm going to tell you what, He changes things. This passage says that He immediately received His sight.

And you know, one of the things that I love about coming to California is seeing the sun go down in the Pacific Ocean. It's amazing.

[12:07] I've been in all 50 states and quite a few other countries, and nothing beats the sunset right over here about however many miles Ventura is from here. And I've been out on that coast more than a few times, and it just, my wife makes me take her there and build a fire, and we just watch the sun go down, and it's, I don't know, people got to go to all these Disney worlds and all that stuff, man.

I'll tell you what, what God does on a regular basis is more spectacular than what man can do on his best day. So that'd be a good place for an amen, by the way.

Okay, don't worry, I'll help you. I'm here to help, you know. This guy's never seen a flower, never seen a tree, never seen a child. Maybe he'd never seen his own child.

I don't know if he had a family, I don't know if he had children, but whatever the scenario, whatever the case was with Bartimaeus, when the Lord healed and when the Lord said, receive thy sight, it says immediately he received his sight.

And it's also significant to point out that the first person that Bartimaeus ever saw was the Lord Jesus Christ. I know some blind ladies from North Carolina that sing at camp meetings back there and they'll say, we feel sorry for you people that can see.

[13:31] And they got to be led up to the platform and everything and real nice gals. And they said, we feel sorry for you sighted people. And they said, the first person we'll ever see is Jesus Christ.

Well, that's a good attitude. That's kind of contrary to the attitude of the age in which we live where everybody's looking for a reason to get victim pity, you know.

They're not looking for that. It said immediately he received his sight. Now up until this point, everything in Bartimaeus' life was black, visually, just black.

His normal was darkness. One of the things I don't like about winter is that it stays dark so long in the morning. I like it when the sun starts coming through the window before six o'clock.

Amen. I like that. It provokes me to get up earlier. I like it when it stays light longer too. And by the way, I'm against daylight saving time. How stupid is that?

[14:34] But still, I like it when it's light out. Now I didn't always, I wasn't always that way. When I was a lost man, when I was a biker, outlaw biker, not just a biker, an outlaw biker, I didn't even like daytime.

I mean, if you're up in the daytime, it means you're getting something fixed or you're going to court. We kind of waited and came out at night. The Bible said in John 3, men love darkness because their deeds were evil.

Amen. We're kind of like vampires when you seen the sun started to come up, you had to get back to your coffin or something because you didn't like the daylight. I like it now. I like the light. I read this and other accounts and I just, I'm glad I don't know what that's like for my normal to be darkness.

Darkness describes an unsaved person's spiritual condition. person might be able to see, but darkness, as a matter of fact, the angel Gabriel told Zacharias in Luke chapter 1 that John the Baptist's commission, he wasn't born yet, but his commission was going to be to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Darkness is the spiritual condition of a person that is not saved. Take your Bible, just, we're going to hold our place there in Luke, but we're going to Luke, I'm sorry, Acts 26.

[16:11] Acts chapter 26. Acts chapter 26, you've got Paul giving his testimony to King Agrippa.

He's on trial, he's been incarcerated, he's bound in chains, he's been given permission to defend himself, which he wanted to do because he had every intention of bragging on Jesus Christ, and he gives his testimony.

It strikes me that he's in this circumstance of which he's never truly a free man again. He gets taken to Rome as a prisoner, he's on house arrest for several years, the Lord uses it mightily, and he writes the Pauline epistles that have so much impact on, well, every Christian sense, but he's in that condition, and he says in verse 2, he says, I think myself happy.

So again, you need to realize that he's not in a good situation, he's on trial, I mean, they did execute people back then, and he indeed was executed before he was ever a free man again.

Years up the road, though, the Lord had something for him. But he gives his testimony, and he says, I think myself happy, King Agrippa. And I know Christians that can't seem to think themselves happy on a good day.

[17:35] I mean, I've been in places where people were almost, would get borderline offended if you saw anything good in some things.

And I personally, I think that's a personality disorder, you know. My Bible said, if there be any virtue, think on these things. No wonder the world is so stinking depressed.

I am so glad that I am saved, that I'm not going to hell, that that makes just about everything else going on tolerable. You know what I'm saying? But, you know, it's a choice, and Paul made it, and he said, I think myself happy.

And he goes on to verse 18, and he gives his testimony and then his commission. And he says, to open their eyes, well, verse 17, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee.

And here's his commission, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.

[18:44] And truth is, Satan's got the power to cause people to think they're okay, even though spiritually they are in darkness.

If you do much personal work at all, you've handed somebody a track, and they might not have got ugly with you. And truth be known, I've, you know, I've had circumstances.

I mean, there's jerks everywhere, but usually, you know, usually people take them, and when they don't, they'll say no. But I've had people say, I'm okay. I'm okay.

Have you heard that? I'm okay. That doesn't mean they're saved. That means they don't want it.

And, according to the verse, Satan has the power to make people think they're okay when they are indeed far from okay, spiritually speaking, because they're not thinking on the spiritual level.

We're supposed to be. It's to our shame that we're not as often as we should be. But it says this in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 4, In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

[20:01] Let me say something to you tonight. If you're in here tonight and you're not saved, I appreciate you're in church on Friday night, but if you're not saved, living in spiritual darkness describes you right now.

And the good news is this. That darkness can be turned to light. Amen. Immediately. I came in and the pastor and Brother Rutz are sitting at the little table out there.

It's a very dimly lit room. And, you know, I complimented them on their attempt to create an ambiance that I wasn't used to in a church.

I was glad there was no music going. I wouldn't be afraid to know it. That'd be like, and there's a big old electrical thing sitting on the table and it's a ballast and biggest one I've ever seen, but, you know, I'm a motorcycle guy.

And, uh, and, uh, it's in there. Yeah, this ballast is out and this light's off. And I'm going, oh, wow. Good thing we're not having fellowship tonight because, you know, it was pretty dim in there.

[21 : 11] And, you know, I sat there talking to Brother Rutz for five or ten minutes and Allie walks in, walks over, turns the light switch on. All the lights came in except this one.

And we're sitting in darkness as if, and it was, I prefer light. I was telling the preacher, I've been, I've been moving furniture around in my hotel room to get as much light as possible.

Amen? If you're in spiritual darkness here tonight, well, it's like flipping a switch and going from darkness to light spiritually by putting your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen? Uh, we're all familiar with the verse that says all is sin and comes short of the glory of God. And we have a sin debt and we all did. And if you're in here and not saved, you still do.

Uh, we have a sin debt that we cannot pay. Clark Howard, uh, Dave Ramsey or whatever, there's probably some guru out here. Uh, and I'll try to help you with your finances for a fee.

[22 : 20] Uh, hello, any flags ever go up? Oh, broke? Here, send me what money you have left and you'll be broker, you know. But, uh, there's no fix for the sin debt problem except the blood of Jesus Christ.

And verse 24 there in Romans chapter 3 says being justified freely by His grace. We have redemption. We are, by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

What a blessing to know you can go from darkness to light in here tonight if you're not saved.

Amen? So our passage said, now back to Luke chapter whatever it was.

I said, I don't know. It would be bad if we all forgot, wouldn't it? Uh, Luke chapter 18 and verse 43 and it said, immediately received His sight and then it said, and followed Him.

See that? It says, and followed Him. In Mark's account in chapter 10 and verse 52 it says this, and Jesus said unto him, go thy way. Thy faith hath made thee whole and immediately, and immediately He received His sight and followed Jesus in the way.

[23 : 31] That's how Mark recorded it. Luke just said He followed Him. Uh, Jesus said, go thy way but He didn't go His way. Uh, it says He, uh, He followed Jesus in the way.

He, that means in the way Jesus was going. Whatever His plans were, whatever His agenda was, whatever He thought was important, when Jesus Christ healed him and gave him His sight, it changed everything and He followed Jesus.

And I'm happy to report, and some of you know it's true, and maybe some of you are just learning it, but I'm telling you, the Lord will change the direction of your life if you let Him.

Now, a sinner comes to the honest moment in his life where he admits that he has a sin problem that if the Bible's true, it's going to take him to hell. And you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, and that direction will change.

But Luke chapter 9, Jesus said, I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. He'll save your soul if you never darken the door of a church or open a Bible again.

[24 : 46] if you get in a place and a position where you trust Him, you trust the gospel. But boy, are you missing out not only on the blessings of God in your own life, but an opportunity to show Him that you appreciate what He did by learning how to be a light in a dark world.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. He said, it says there that He followed Jesus in the way.

He didn't follow Jesus to see what He was going to do next. A lot of people did. Through all the Gospels, you had multitudes following Jesus Christ because this guy is doing what nobody had ever done.

He's healing the blind, He's raising the dead, He's casting out demons, one of my personal favorites. He's combing the sea. He's doing, I mean, don't you think that if Jesus Christ would have been walking around here today and walked over on the beach in Tampa, Florida a couple weeks ago when that hurricane was coming in and don't you think He'd have made all the news channels if He would have combed that storm?

I mean, people, multitudes, followed Jesus Christ for three and a half years to see what He'd do next. But that's not why this guy followed Him. He didn't follow Him because of what Him or the, like I said, Matthew pointed out there to them, they didn't follow Jesus because of what He might do for them.

[26 : 18] Like many today. People are hanging around going to church because, you know, what's He going to do for me? We're a me-oriented society.

And it's a cry in shame and a sad truth that there's way too much of that in Bible Christianity. Amen. He didn't follow Jesus in the way because He was worried that if He didn't, He might go blind again. He said, well, I better, no, it wasn't like that. And I just say this, worrying about losing your salvation is a bondage that Jesus Christ never intended for a believer to have once the Lord set him free. And the truth of the matter is, there's most professing Christians right now, in the back of their mind, they are afraid of losing it. There's a lot of things I don't know.

I don't know what tomorrow will bring. That's why I don't brag on it. Now, I got plans, but God's, I gave Him permission to interrupt my plans anytime He wants. And which was very, you know, generous of me because He doesn't need your permission.

[27 : 27] Amen. But, so I don't know what's going to happen. I got a plan. I got an itinerary. I got, but there's one thing I do know that's going to happen. There's one thing I'm not worried about one bit.

I'm not worried about dying and going to hell. I know on the authority of that book that I'm going to heaven no matter what I do. And that's freedom. And that's the freedom that makes me more in awe of His mercy and love and grace and long-suffering and patience.

That's the freedom that makes me want to get right with God when my stinking flesh has caused me to do something to endanger my fellowship with Him.

And by the grace of God, I don't have to go over the cliff as much as I maybe once did as a child of God when I start getting close to the edge that no, flags are going up and I want to get right with God.

Was that confusing? Yeah, I'm confused, so don't feel bad about that. He followed Him, both these guys, because of what He just did, because of what He'd already done.

[28 : 40] He healed them. He said, Your faith hath made thee whole. The Bible says in Romans 12, we hit it the other night, it says, I beseech thee there for our brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your reasonable purpose.

I was in the army and you know, if we're in formation out of tension, an officer comes in, we present arms. It's a willing show of respect.

He says, present. He ain't going to make you do it. Paul doesn't say a new commandment. He says, I beseech thee, brethren.

Why? Because in light of what Jesus Christ did to make a way for you to be saved, plus, I mean, He's given me so many victories over so many bad things in my life.

I mean, the list is long. But in light of what He had to do to make us free, indeed, it is reasonable to follow Him.

[29 : 49] Amen. Sounds reasonable to me. Bartimaeus followed Jesus Christ out of gratitude to show that he appreciated what he did.

To tell you the truth, I mean, that's the best reason for me and you to follow Him too. Isn't it? There's a song, I have decided to follow Jesus, and they do it in vacation Bible school, and they do it in Christian school, and they do it in chapel services, and it's like, how does it go?

The world behind me, you know, you go through the motions with the kids. The world behind me, the cross before me, and so it almost kind of gets delegated as a kid's thing.

I'm going to tell you what, that might be one of the deepest spiritually thinking, deepest hymns there is. I'm going to tell you something, after getting saved, that's the best thing I ever did.

That's the beginning of wisdom, that's the smartest thing I ever did. If you're saved, you're the smartest thing you ever did. Amen. If you're in here and you're not saved, that'd be the smartest thing you'd ever do. I led a 13-year-old kid to the Lord one time not long ago, and I said, son, you got more sense at 13 years old than I had when I was 36, and I got saved at 37.

[31 : 16] But if I could do it all over again, boy, I'd get saved a lot earlier than I did. You get saved by admitting you're a sinner, but then you have a decision to make, and I have decided to follow Jesus, and that's the second best decision I ever made.

I'd been saved about seven months. I was on a pre-sentence investigation, waiting to go to penitentiary. I'd already pled guilty to seven years, but now I'm so excited about going to heaven and taking Bible Institute classes in a federal prison that I'm waiting for my sentence date to come, and I responded to an old-fashioned convicting message, and I went to an altar like this, and I just laid my life on the line.

I said, God, anything you say, I will do anything you want. For seven years, after I got probation, I expected to be in the prison ministry the rest of my life.

Then the Lord changed that plan and put me in the ministry preaching to non-convicted felons. Mark McGay told me one time, he said, isn't it something that God would take an old rascal like you, old drug addict, drunk, gang member, criminal, in and out of jail, and put him in the ministry preaching holiness to a bunch of church folk?

God's got a sense of humor. That's all I can do. I go to prison, man, I fit right in. I roll my sleeves up. I got more tattoos than they do. But God's idea was to get me in here in places like this telling you that it is reasonable to follow Jesus Christ.

[32 : 53] And it just occurs to me if somebody like me can, nobody's got an excuse not to. Amen? Now, we all fight the battle with the flesh and we lose more than we should.

fight. But if there's anything I would want to encourage you to do is fight! Fight harder. When you mess up, get up. Get back in the fight.

Amen and amen. I have decided to follow Jesus. I hope you have, but I'm going to tell you right now, it is a decision that you're going to have to make. Your flesh will not do that on its own. Bartimaeus did. Amen? I did. Many, many have. Everyone should. Everyone doesn't. What a thing it is that people will take the greatest gift, the most expensive gift ever given, the gift of eternal life that came at the expense of the life of God's only son.

They'll embrace that because, hey, who wants to go to hell? And then act like they're doing God a favor by showing up at church once in a while. I don't get that kind of mentality.

[34 : 03] Whatever I got involved in from teenager, whether it's the military or the bike gangs, if I got involved in it, I went all the way. The more I learned about Jesus Christ, the more I realized that I have a debt.

My sin debt's paid. But I owe him my life. And when I give it to him, buddy, it ain't been hard. It ain't been grievous. It's only grievous if you're kicking against the pricks, if you're fighting it.

There's something inside of you that wants to live for God. Amen. What do we have meetings for? What do we have church for every week? To encourage you to let the spirit nature that's in you prevail.

You got to feed it. You feed it with Bible. You feed it with prayer. You feed it with church. And you feed it with Christian fellowship. And it'll grow in strength. And yes, you'll be able to do something with Jesus.

Okay. You'll enjoy your Christianity. I had more fun than I ever had. Amen. Most miserable people I've ever met since I've been a child of God are people that probably are sure enough saved and they're backslid and they're miserable and you can tell it.

[35 : 23] Lost people, they think they're having fun. Amen. I thought I was. But boy, I've run across people and they're mean and miserable and I come to it now that I know a little Bible, I found out why.

The spirit of God is so grieved and quenched and I'm going, I don't have the character to live like that. If I was you, if that's your case, you're fighting something again. Keep fighting.

Get right with God. You'll be glad you did. Amen. Bartimaeus followed him out of gratitude.

Everyone doesn't, but we should. And let me ask you, how about you tonight? I see you're in church on Friday night. Amen. But are you following Jesus Christ or just fitting him in when?

There's a benefit in it for you. All right. Let's continue with our verse. Now, verse 43 said, immediately.

[36 : 25] Immediately. He received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. He's glorifying God. Amen. We read the verse. It said in verse 39, and they which went before rebuked him that he should hold his peace.

But he cried out the more, thou son of David, have mercy on me. They tried to shut him up, but he got louder. When I first got saved, I was in church. Like I said, I was on a pre-sentence investigation for almost a year.

And I'd sit there in the second row, and you know, I had the ponytail, and you know, the goatee, and little by little, you know, the Lord started dealing with me. And I would sit there, and I would just soak it up.

And every once in a while, once I saw how church went, you know, sometimes a pastor would ask for testimony, and people would say, well, God did this, or answered this prayer. And as you can

see, I'm a very shy person, but I tried to overcome it.

And one time they said, has anybody got a word testimony? And I raised my hand, second row. And the preacher would call on me. He said, David, I said, I just want to say, I am glad to be saved. [37 : 33] Amen. And man, and I meant it. And I didn't think nothing about it. And because I was sitting up front, and any time the preacher would say that, I'd raise my hand, and he'd call on me first.

And he'd call on other people, too. But I found out later that one of these guys had been in the church for 20 years, one of these old stick-in-the-muds that thought that they should have way more say-so than they did.

Went to the preacher and said, you know what, it's just irritating that every time you ask for somebody to have to have a testimony, Spurgeon is the first one.

Think about that. You better not ever get that way. You better not ever get that cold on God that it bothers you when someone else is excited.

But we can get that way. I've seen it. I've seen it. You know what my preacher said in his wisdom? Now, I didn't even know about this for several years. And he never did tell me who it was, but I think I figured it out.

[38 : 37] Don't matter. Don't matter. But he says, it bothers you that Spurgeon always is the first one to get his hand up? He said, well, yeah. And the preacher looked at him and says, then you be first.

Then you beat him. You hear me? Oh, Bartimaeus is glorifying God. He's calling out and they couldn't shut him up.

They couldn't shut him up when he was lost. You know they ain't going to shut him up now. Amen. And it said, he's glorifying God.

Verse 39 says, and they which went before rebuked him. Okay, I guess we've read that. That he's an oldest piece. And he cried out to more. And, you know, the guy is just excited about, you know, we would say saved.

He didn't have the lingo yet. He was excited. He knew this, though. He knew he couldn't see. Like that guy, whose sin was this? I don't know, but I know this, you know. I couldn't see before, now I can.

[39 : 40] That was a Dave Spurgeon paraphrase. I want to make that clear for the folks at home, which I hope there aren't any. But, amen. He is excited about receiving his sight.

I tried to give you some examples of the difference between being in darkness and being in light and the things that you could see and enjoy. And wouldn't you be excited? If you were blind and you received your sight, that's all.

And it makes sense to me, but yet there's many people that I know who claim to be saved. They're not excited about Jesus Christ. They don't glorify God in any way of their life.

Why? And it's because, not that they're not saved, not that they don't love Jesus or believe the King James Bible. The problem is, they're way too excited about other things in their life.

And, listen, people aren't ashamed at all. They're not even reluctant to tell you what they love, what they care about. If you don't believe me, next time you go to Walmart instead of driving around using a half a tank of gas to get a spot by the door.

[40 : 49] You know, like it's like a holding pattern at O'Hare. You know, people are driving around and I'm thinking about the price of gas, man. And, but park out, way out in the parking lot.

It'll probably be good for you anyway. Park way out in the parking lot and as you walk toward the door, you start reading bumper stickers on cars. License plate trims.

People's T-shirts. Ball caps. Jackets. That's right. You guys don't wear jackets. Okay. Oh, unless it gets down to like 50, right? I get it. Okay. And that, but what I'm saying is this.

People are not ashamed to let you know what they love. They'll tell you about their favorite team. If you're in North Carolina, you'll know what everybody's favorite NASCAR driver is and things like that. And, and that book says this.

In Romans chapter 1 and verse 16, Paul said, for I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

[41 : 47] And the first time I read that verse and I've been saved very long and I looked at that thing and all them years in the motorcycle club, 15 years, colors on my back, tattooed on. Harley shirts, everything.

I wasn't reluctant to let people know what I loved, what I cared about. And I got saved and I read that verse and I said, what a crying shame it'd be if somebody like me was, was reluctant to let people know I love Jesus Christ.

But I'm going to tell you what, I know a lot of Christians and about the last thing they're talking about outside the doors of the church is Jesus Christ and they talk about everything else and it's okay to love things, it's okay to enjoy things.

Amen. Like I say, I was talking to Dave, I'm a motorcycle guy still. Amen. But boy, my perspective's right now. My priorities are in line. He's first. This world needs Jesus Christ.

Our life is supposed to glorify Jesus Christ. I'll prove it to you. Look at 1 Corinthians 6. Yeah.

[43 : 04] I'm not talking about glorifying God but being big mouth like me shouting and all that and I like all that stuff but yeah, she would say, well, that's not my personality.

Until you're at a baseball game, you've heard that before, you know. I mean, if people sat in church, sat at the stadium after buying a season ticket like a bump on the log like so many church people do.

You can see I'm getting more diplomatic because I didn't say like some of you even though it was in my mind. I didn't say that. And if they sat in the bleachers with the blank stare while their team hit a home run or got a touchdown, I mean, they'd think they were, you know, mental.

Well, that's what I think about Christians that don't ever get excited about Jesus Christ. I think you're mental. I think you're FLESH is running the show.

And I'm right. And I'm trying to help you get that worked out. 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 19. Paul says this, What?

[44 : 19] Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which ye have which is in you which ye have of God and ye are not your own?

He's talking to a church just like I am tonight. He said, What? No, you're not. Evidently not. So this was definitely just a Baptist church because I work with that every week.

Verse 20 says, You're bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.

See, there's more than just being a, you know, loud amen-er. Amen? Glorify God in your body.

What does that mean? Where you go. Does where you go, child of God, bring glory to God?

Does what you do, what you talk about, does what you think about, bring glory to God? Psalm 19 of verse 14 or 14, 19, I think it's 19, 14 says, Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

[45 : 27] Do you know that God, I mean, read the Gospels, come on, the Lord knows what you're thinking. Does what you're thinking glorify God? I've got to be honest, some of the things that come into my mind don't glorify God.

Some of the things that come into my mind, Lord willing, not mouth, I'm ashamed of. And I admit it. I admit it to Him.

I ask Him to forgive me. I ask Him to help me all the time. Amen? I'm going to tell you what Christians don't do and they need to do is you need to think about what you think about because you're to glorify God in your body.

Amen? Let me ride that horse into the sunset. How about what do you look at on the internet? Oh, but you mentioned that last night. Oh, I'm going to mention it every night until the Lord comes back if He tells me to.

That is such a snare. It says in, you know, there's too much. That's not the main point. So let me just give you a couple verses that I believe the Lord gave me.

[46 : 40] Matthew chapter 5, verse 28, says this, whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

That's kind of serious. Adultery is pretty serious. Oh, I would never do that. You better be careful what you're looking at. Amen?

I'll give you another one. Give one for the ladies. Proverbs chapter 7, verse 10, says, And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot and subtle of, subtle of, let me see, subtle of heart.

Brother Walski was telling me about it. He was trying to find me a hotel to stay in. And I said, well, you know, I'm not, you know, I don't need any fancy.

Just trying not to get one where the written room by the hour. Some of you get that. Some of you won't. Maybe I shouldn't even set it. But that thing says the attire of a harlot.

[47 : 48] Now, I sure wouldn't go into any detail, but I've been around long enough and I've been enough places to know that the purpose of the attire of a harlot is to attract, for a woman, to attract attention from a man to make him desire her.

And that's not for conversation. That's what the attire of a harlot is. My preacher was at a big meeting down in North Carolina one time and he was just, he was appalled at the way the teen group, the girls, were dressed.

And he got up and he read that verse and he said, ladies, let me tell you something. If it ain't for sale, why are you advertising it? Yeah, he quenched the spirit of the whole meeting. I'm the one that was amening though.

It was right on the money. Let me ask you something, ladies. Men, you need to be careful what you look at because it'll lead to that and that needs to be repented of. But I'm going to tell you what, ladies, let me ask you something.

Does how you dress incite lust in the heart of a man? We live in a day and age where women, Christian women, are going outside dressed in their underwear and it's appalling to me.

[49 : 07] Now, when I was lost, it didn't bother me. But it blows my mind. I won't go any farther than that. Amen? You need to understand, he has committed adultery with her.

Don't dress, ladies, don't dress in such a way that'll cause a man to look at parts of your body that are none of his stinking business and then cause him.

We're to glorify God in our body and what we do. And it's an uphill battle. But I'm going to tell you what, some Christians, they ain't fighting a battle at all.

They've rolled over, they've surrendered, and they don't like people like me talking about it. Which is why God's got people like me talking about it.

Amen? This guy, brand new, just received his sight, follows God out of gratitude, and he's glorifying God.

[50 : 09] Let's keep going. Does your social media account glorify God? Amen? I would say Facebook, but you'd snicker because there's probably ten other names by now.

But you know what I'm talking about. Does it glorify God? Amen? I mean, it could. I mean, I could definitely see value to a platform that would allow you to present Bible verses or principles or brag on God.

What a great open door. And I don't doubt that some people use it for that. But let's be honest, 90% of the whole social media thing is all about you.

What I did, where I'm going, what I like, what I don't like. What a waste. Amen? And boy, the temptation, it seems to be so easy because so many Christians have got to, you know, subtly, there's that word again, critiquing preachers, churches, churches, other Christians.

People will leave a church and they'll all stay connected on that. You ought to be connected with chains taken somewhere and whipped. Amen. That was good.

[51 : 31] Hold on a second. Amen, Brother Spurgeon. Amen. All right. We're talking about glorifying God in his body. We're talking about social media as mostly people talking about themselves.

You know it's true. Don't amen it. You know it's right. The Bible says in Proverbs 20, verse 6, most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness. That's how we're wired. We're not supposed to be wired that way with the Spirit of God inside of us, though.

Would somebody agree with that? Amen. It said glorify God in your body. That's a tall order, but then it says and in your spirit. Now, the Bible talks about things like pride and envy and bitterness and covetousness and things like that.

Physical sins devile the body, but there are some things that are addressed quite often that defile the spirit and they're not visible and you can fake it till you make it.

I'm here to tell you that stuff deviles your spirit. It does not glorify God. Let me ask this question before I move on. Does your spirit glorify God?

[52 : 38] Your attitude? Amen. Or are you a big drama junkie? It's all about you. What you think. Does your spirit glorify God?

Do you have a spirit of gratitude for what Jesus Christ has done? Truth of the matter is, he's been. It says, I think, in Job chapter 11, he exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.

And boy, God's been better to every single one of us than we deserve. And how dare you whine and complain all the time. And I understand why you do. It's part of our nature. It's flesh. But listen, you've got something else, don't you? You've got the Holy Spirit, don't you? You've got a Bible, don't you? Amen. That's access to things that God's made available to us. Amen? All right. Let me read the verse out of 2 Corinthians 7 and I'll move on. Or start that point over again. Should we take a bowl?

[53 : 41] Okay. Having therefore these promises, that's referring to chapter 6, 2 Corinthians chapter 6. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit.

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Bartimaeus glorified God in his body. He's praising God with a loud voice and in his spirit.

Why? Because he was thankful enough to change the direction of his life and follow the one that brought him out of the horrible pit. And so should you and I. I'm going to need an amen to move on. See, I'm shallow. I admit it though. I admit it. All right. So let's be honest. If you're saved near tonight, and I'm not asking for a show of hands, but if you're saved in here, what the Lord did for you is a much bigger deal than what he did for Bartimaeus.

And three of our gospel writers mentioned what he did for Bartimaeus. But boy, restoring somebody's sight is nothing compared to saving their eternal soul.

[54 : 57] It said there in verse 43 in our text, it said, And immediately he received his sight and followed him and glorified God. Nice little three points, but I don't have a poem, so let's get our fourth point, and we'll be done someday.

Okay. The verse finishes with these words. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

You know, when things really change in your life, people notice. Amen? Excuse me.

The changed life is the greatest witness there is. We got our little pamphlet, our soul winning pamphlet, and we got our little program and our schedule, and we pray and brainstorm and try to figure out how to reach the world.

I got a email today from that guy up the road here that we were mentioning earlier. And buddy, those people are pros and they figure out ways.

[56 : 02] And I just want to tell you that the greatest witness there is on this planet is a changed life. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature.

All things are passed away. Behold, all things have become new. When your direction in your life changes out of gratitude for Jesus Christ and you put more emphasis, glorifying him, whether it's on your social media account or at work or in your life, that doesn't mean you can't enjoy lots of other things.

But when your priorities change, people notice. Now, everybody's not going to come up and go, oh, this is such a wonderful thing. Tell me about it. Oftentimes, quite the contrary.

They might be very contentious, but they can't get away from the fact that Jesus Christ is knocking on the door of their heart.

And that's what he's doing every time a seed's sown. Amen? We're talking about a man here, Bartimaeus, literally going from darkness to light.

[57 : 15] It says this, 1 Peter 2, verse 9, but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

But, Brother Virgin, 2 Peter 2, it's written to the trip, St. Bobo. Are you saved? Has he brought you out of darkness? Would you say that the light that he's brought to you was marvelous?

Amen? If you are, your life should show forth the praises of him who hath brought you out of darkness into his marvelous light. We're supposed to be a light to those that are still in darkness.

This enjoying the fellowship and getting together and encouraging one another and praying, this is all icing on the cake. It's like heaven. This is all the icing on the cake. God left the church here to be a light until it's done, until the fullness of the Gentiles come in, and then we go out of here.

And we're not hanging on the edge of our seats, biting our fingernails, waiting for the Lord to come back. We're supposed to be busy about the Father's business, like a soldier behind enemy lines trying to work their way to do as much damage for a soldier to do as much as they can until reinforcements arrive, boy, and reinforcements are coming with the voice of an archangel, and

we're out of here.

[58 : 44] All right? So, three questions if you claim to be safe. Are you following him? Again, I acknowledge you're here on Friday night.

You should be following him. If not, who are you following? Who or what has your attention, your affection over Jesus Christ?

And you might say, well, wait, but maybe you should ask, maybe you should ask the Lord about that. Maybe he feels something to you that needs some spiritual attention.

That's what you want. That's what this whole thing is. Bible Christianity is a personal relationship. It's not like the guy that says to his wife on their wedding day, I love her, and then never talks to her again for ten years.

I mean, that's the most obvious, ridiculous scenario there is. But yet, many Christians, they might, go to work, honey, see you later.

[59 : 47] That's how we do God. When the Spirit of God impresses something through the Word of God on your heart, you do well.

You do well for your own sake to say, is that for me? Sometimes it's going to be for you, sometimes it's not. But you ought to always stay willing to ask unless something else has got your attention and you're not willing to budge.

And that isn't spiritual, that's flesh. And I'll tell you what I see some of the churches I go to, I'll tell you who's got the attention of some Christians that I know don't doubt, I'd say I don't doubt or say, love the book, but they're spending more time listening to some internet kook.

And this is going on all over. For our realm, you've got to be real careful about that. Satan himself is able to transform himself into an angel of light.

Alright, I'm going to move on. Do you glorify God? Or is it all about you? Bible says, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.

[61 : 06] Let me tell you something, child of God, and we have issues and we're to hear and we put them, I get all that, but every conversation is not supposed to end up being all about you.

our conversation is to be about him. He's to have the preeminence, not you.

His opinion, more important than yours. He's doing things that you don't have any clue about because you're focused on your little world.

that's out of order. We preached that yesterday or are we going to preach it tomorrow? I'm all confused. That's out of order. Amen.

I'm going to amen myself again. Does anybody see anything in you that causes them to wonder what happened to you?

[62 : 03] They should. New creature in Christ. Things change. Amen. All right. So, the rest is between you and God.

The message has been preached, but I want to say this. If there's an outside chance somebody in here tonight is not saved, you are still in darkness. And what a crying shame it would be to leave out of here when that can be changed by faith in what Jesus Christ did for you.

It's not a matter of whether you need it, whether you've ever done anything. You all have sinned. If you've never trusted Jesus Christ personally, understanding that he was nailed to a cross for you so that you could believe on him, believe in thine heart, it says.

If you've never done that, you better do that before it's too late. This will be a great night. A great night to get saved. Let's all stand. We got people in here that will pray with you, open a Bible with you.

This ain't a game, friends. It's the most important issue there is. God's been good to us, hasn't he? And we ought to return the favor. We ought to follow him.

[63 : 25] We ought to follow him closer than we've been following him. you know, the problem with Christianity in this age, the Laodicean age, it's Bible, I'm not just talking, is that most of what passes for Christianity is so far out in left field and headed the wrong way that us Bible believers, we actually have convinced ourselves we're way more spiritual than we really are just because we have the King James Bible and we're eternally secure.

and we can rightly divide. And we think, and we're, no, we're that crowd that's rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing if you don't understand that you've got to stay humble and sensitive to the Spirit of God and when the Word of God is preached, you better receive it.

And if you don't, if you just check it off, say that's for somebody else, sometimes it might be. But you ought to come in saying, God, speak to me tonight.

Doesn't matter if anybody else is here. Oh, I wish they would have come. God knows who's here. You ought to come wanting to hear from God.

And on a bad day, you'll hear something that will reinforce your faith in the Savior. hear. But you just might hear something that's so personal, that hits so close to home, you'll appreciate God loving you enough to speak to you personally and you'll respond.

[65 : 11] If your heart's tender. But if it's all about you, that's about nice clothes, altar's open, music's playing, and all the little ritual routine stuff, you need to talk to God, do.

Where you're at, at the altar, get on a ladder, get on the roof, I don't care. But if the Lord spoke to you, there's an area here that needs some spiritual attention, I pray that you give it some spiritual attention.

Because I know this, boy, as soon as that final amen, that final song's over, you go out of this place, and you get in your car, you go a couple blocks, and you get out there in traffic Friday night, and you're going to have your wits about you because the idiots are more plentiful tonight than usual.

If you think that's a California scenario, I'm telling you here tonight, that in every church across the country, when the final amen is said, and the congregation dismissed, if you didn't respond to the Spirit of God, the devil will move in and steal the message.

If you're on the backside of nowhere in North Carolina, let alone here, and that's why it's important to respond.

[66 : 51] She's playing, I have decided to follow Jesus. I've made that. One of the choruses, stanzas says, who will go with me? I trust that's what Brother Russ is going to lead us in.

Look at the words. Take it to heart. Make a commitment tonight. You'll be glad you did. Others will be glad you did. Somebody you'll affect. They'll notice. They won't like being under conviction, but that's okay.

It's still good for them. We need to just, we need to kick it up a notch and quit being satisfied with doing next to nothing.

Take this thing more seriously like you did one day. Maybe it was years ago, but it's more important than ever. The fourth quarter is not when you throw in the towel.

It's when you fight harder than ever. A clock's ticking. Let's do something for God while we can.