

The Clear Sight Of The Blind Man

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[0 : 0 0] In the last few chapters, Mark has been carrying us along, so to speak, on Jesus's journey from Galilee, really north of Galilee, as we trace this back to chapter 8.

He's in the region of Caesarea Philippi. That's where his transfiguration takes place. And then Mark's kind of carrying us along on this journey as Jesus moves from there, eventually to Jerusalem, where here in just a couple of chapters, we're going to see the story of his crucifixion and his resurrection.

And along the way, we've had several stops with Mark, each one with a significant event or lesson for us to study. Well, this is the final stop, at least before we get to Jerusalem.

This is the final stop, and the event recorded here unfolds in the city of Jericho. Now, what probably immediately comes to mind for most of us is the destruction of Jericho from Joshua chapter 6.

That's one of the first stories we learn in Sunday school growing up, isn't it? And we have the songs, Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho. And we learn about how the children of Israel marched around the city, and God destroyed the city.

[1 : 1 3] And we learn about Rahab and God's salvation of her and her family in the midst of all that. Perhaps when you hear Jericho, that's immediately where your thoughts go. But Jericho was the area around it, the region around it, has been rebuilt many, many times through history.

And I think, if I'm not mistaken, maybe seven different times the city has been destroyed and rebuilt. And by the time Jesus is traveling through in this particular time frame, it was rebuilt by Herod, and it was a crucial, vital rest station for travelers that were on their way to Jerusalem.

It was situated about 15 or 20 miles northeast of Jerusalem, but it was 3,500 feet below Jerusalem. So this was an important stop.

It was at the edge of the desert, and so travelers would come through on their pilgrimage path. They would find their place in Jericho for one last rest and maybe to collect the things that they would need before they set out toward Jerusalem, which would have been a grueling trek from that particular place.

It was called the city of Palms a couple of times in the scriptures, actually. And the reason is because it was an oasis city. It was literally in the desert, in the Judean desert.

[2 : 3 1] It was literally an oasis. And Herod had taken a particular interest in it. He had built his winter palaces there. And by the time of Jesus and his disciples, it was really used by the wealthy as somewhat of a vacation destination.

And so it's been rebuilt many times. And it's actually, most historians believe that it's the oldest inhabited civilized place on the planet.

It's an interesting location. That's where Jesus is. Jericho had a significance to the Jews as well, though. It was a designated city for the Levitical priests who were rostered to serve on duty at the temple.

They would live there. They had access from there to Jerusalem to do what it was that they were required to do as the priest. And like I said, it was also situated on the pilgrimage path for Jews that would travel to Jerusalem for the various festivals and feasts.

Passover being the reason they would be traveling there at this particular time. So when Jesus and the disciples arrived to Jericho, it's a busy city at the moment.

[3 : 45] It's energized at the moment. There's lots of people there. They've traveled because they wouldn't go through Samaria. They've traveled from Galilee on the pilgrimage path through the desert. They've come to their final resting station.

So there's the people traveling through. Then there's the priests who are preparing to make their way that week to Jerusalem because they had to partake in the process and the duties of Passover.

Now imagine all of these people for Passover are coming to Jerusalem. Many of them are not bringing their own lambs. Many of them are not bringing their own sacrifices. They would get to Jerusalem and they would purchase them there.

And then they would have to take them to all of these priests who pretty much all day on Passover day are doing nothing but sacrificing lamb after lamb after lamb. Took a lot of people. So there's a lot of preparation happening in Jericho.

Lots of people are about to make this final push to Jerusalem. The city's busy. It's energetic. There's lots of things taking place. And this is what explains this great crowd that Mark says was now walking with Jesus and pressing forward, maybe even potentially groping forward to get a glimpse of him, perhaps hear him speak.

[4 : 57] And then as they're leaving the city, they pass by the traditional place in Jericho or outside of Jericho for beggars to sit seeking alms.

And this is where we're introduced to a man named Bartimaeus. Now of all the people Jesus healed during his life, this is the only one whose name is given to us by Mark.

It's a bit of a redundancy in the passage. Actually, Mark's name is Bartimaeus is what Mark says. And then he says he's the son of Timaeus. Well, Bartimaeus literally means son of Timaeus.

So there's a bit of a redundancy here. But at least as far as the people in Rome and the other people who are reading this letter are concerned, they are aware at least of this man named Bartimaeus. Some people have suggested that he became a prominent figure in the early church, which is why his name is given and not the others.

And we don't know that for sure. We can't know that for sure. But what we do know is that the record of Bartimaeus' healing is very important to Mark's gospel.

[6 : 06] And let me explain why. Blindness and sight is this motif of spiritual understanding, this metaphor for spiritual understanding that's interwoven all throughout Mark's gospel.

And this section that we've been dealing with the last really several months at this point of Jesus focusing in on training his disciples, the intensified training of the 12.

This section is bookended by Mark with two different stories of blind men being healed by Jesus. Maybe you'll remember all the way back in chapter 8.

Jesus and the disciples were on the sea of Galilee. They're on the boat. Jesus is teaching about not being aware of the leaven of the Pharisees.

And remember, they thought that Jesus is just worried because they forgot to bring any bread with them. Remember that? And remember how Jesus responded? He said, having eyes, do you not see?

[7 : 04] And immediately after that, he is confronted by a blind man who Jesus heals in two stages. Remember, he touches his eyes first, and he can see, but he can't see clearly.

And then Jesus touches his eyes again, and then he can see everything perfectly. Well, that was a sign of what the disciples' spiritual understanding was like at the time.

Their spiritual eyes had been opened to at least see who Jesus was. But as far as his messianic purpose was concerned, things for the disciples were still pretty fuzzy.

And then he goes through several passages and texts where Mark is sharing with us how Jesus explained to the disciples explicitly about his crucifixion and his resurrection.

He's teaching them lessons about what it means to truly follow him in light of his messianic purpose. And then he brings this section to a conclusion by telling us about Bartimaeus.

[8 : 03] And the uniqueness of this event is in its irony. Of all the people, of all the people here that we're studying, the one with the clearest spiritual sight was a man who couldn't actually see at all.

And that's what's so significant about this passage. Don't think that this is just another miracle story. The meaning of this, it's about what it looks like to truly believe and follow Jesus.

And my prayer for you today is that you will have the eyes to see that. Verses 47 and 48, if you're keeping notes, notice his desperate cry.

His desperate cry. Verse 47, and when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out. You can imagine Bartimaeus finding his place on the roadside as he did every other morning.

For him, there was nothing different about this day except for the fact that there's the potential of more money because the city was so busy. There's so many people coming through. Perhaps it wasn't very long into the morning before he hears the rumblings of a large crowd that are making their way through the town.

[9 : 23] Maybe asking the other beggars around him what was going on. Bartimaeus discovers that the great healer, Jesus the Nazarene, was passing by.

And all of a sudden, Bartimaeus isn't concerned about money or food. This is the only chance he would ever get to experience the healing touch of Jesus.

And he immediately begins to cry out. He began to cry out above the crowd. Now put yourself in Bartimaeus' sandals for just a moment. There might have been hundreds of people in this crowd.

I mean, we have no idea. We're just told it's a great crowd. It's a lot of people. Because of the timing of it, it could have been thousands perhaps. But there's probably a few hundred people that have gathered around Jesus moving along this.

There's a lot of noise happening here. There's just the movement of everybody as they travel up the road. Let alone the conversation that was taking place or the people trying to get to Jesus.

[10 : 24] Now imagine Bartimaeus, you're on the side of the road. You hear the rumblings coming through. And you say, what's going on? And somebody next to you says, this is Jesus the Nazarene.

And he begins to cry out. And his cry was not one that would have been easily ignored. It was the desperate, unabashed cry of a man whose only hope in life had passed by and was quickly moving in the opposite direction.

There was urgency to his cry. There was volume to his cry. But there wasn't just about the urgency. His cry was, and I guess the pun is intended here, the cry was insightful.

It was insightful. Look again at verse 47. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

Have mercy on me. He may have been blind, but he had the eyes of faith. And though he couldn't see Jesus' face, he understood in his heart who Jesus truly was.

[11 : 41] And here's why we know that. He does something no one else in all of Mark's gospel does. He calls Jesus son of David.

One other person does it in Mark's gospel, and it's Jesus himself. And as he passes by, he doesn't say Jesus of Nazareth. He says, Jesus, son of David.

And it's important because this was a messianic title that was based on God's covenant with King David. Now, the Jews knew that a deliverer was coming.

They didn't know who it was, but they knew that he would belong to the lineage of King David. And this covenant is first recorded for us in 2 Samuel chapter 7. Let me read it to you.

Moreover, the Lord declares to you, this is to David, that the Lord will make you a house. And when your days are fulfilled, and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring.

[12 : 42] Offspring is singular in this case. After you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Now, that's not a reference to Solomon. There were other parts of this covenant that did relate to Solomon. But Solomon's kingdom didn't last forever. There's only one person in David's lineage who has an eternal kingdom, and that's Jesus of Nazareth.

The prophets picked up on this imagery. And we see all throughout the prophecies, we see this reference to the son of David and the lineage of David. Let me point out Jeremiah 23, 5.

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous branch, and he shall reign as king, and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

Now, the crowds with Jesus were intrigued by what he could do. But very few people ever had faith in who he revealed himself to be.

[13 : 49] And by God's grace, Bartimaeus had the insight to understand who Jesus was. And his faith was expressed in his cry. It's significant here.

Son of David, this is Bartimaeus saying, I know you're not just a healer. You're the one. Son of David, have mercy. And so we see that his spiritual sight is also revealed in what he asked for Jesus to do.

Don't you find it odd that his cry was for Jesus to show him mercy? Isn't that weird? We might expect him to say, Jesus, son of David, please help me.

Jesus, son of David, please heal me. But that's not what he says. He says, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me. Well, what is mercy?

Mercy is something given that is not deserved. Now, what is it that Bartimaeus is getting at here? He had the faith to believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

[15 : 03] And it seems he also had the insight to acknowledge his own unworthiness before the Lord. That any blessing he might receive from Jesus in that moment was not a blessing he deserved or that he was worthy of.

But it would be solely on the basis of his mercy that Jesus would even care to acknowledge his existence in that moment. That's insightful.

He was concerned for his physical sight. But there was something more at work in Bartimaeus' heart. And he might not have fully understood the significance of this.

But he was certain that his need was great. And only Jesus could do something about it. Says Sinclair Ferguson. Bartimaeus brought nothing but his need.

But in doing so, he fulfilled a fundamental law in God's kingdom. There is no other way to come to Jesus but on the basis of our need and his adequacy to meet it fully.

[16 : 06] And when he cries out for mercy, I think it's a reflection of God's work in Bartimaeus' heart. Where he understands, I don't know everything there is to know about Jesus.

And I certainly don't know everything about what he can do for me. But I know if he does anything, it will be because he's merciful. He's a merciful Lord. The desperate sense of God's mercy is necessary for anyone who comes to Jesus for salvation.

Now think about it for a moment. Why would anyone come to Jesus and cry for him to save them if they didn't believe that they needed saving and that he could do it?

This was the point of Jesus' first two beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Well, what's the poor in spirit? Who are the people who mourn? The people recognizing the true nature of their sinful condition.

[17 : 21] Who come to Jesus alone, asking for mercy. They are the ones who receive the kingdom. They are the ones who receive God's comfort.

The problem is we all struggle so much to really understand how desperate we truly are. I mean, even those of us who are faithful believers and we understand the nature of our sin, we'd be dishonest if we weren't saying that it's difficult for me to really grasp this, at least in an emotional way, to really grasp the fact that I'm really a dirty sinner.

Like, I know that, but I don't always feel like I am. You know what I mean? We struggle with this. We struggle to see the depths of our own depravity and our own need for God's mercy.

And I think the reason is because so much of our beliefs are based on feeling. And since we're so rarely overwhelmed by guilt and shame toward God, we see no reason to very often seek His mercy.

But just because you're not emotionally connected to the truth of your condition doesn't mean you can't acknowledge its reality. God's Word tells us plainly that we're desperately lost in sin.

[18 : 51] In fact, it says we're dead in sin. And that's enough whether we sense it and feel it emotionally in our spirit or not.

It's enough that God has said it. Do you remember the song you learned in Sunday school? Jesus loves me. Remember the song? Jesus loves me.

How do we know? This I know for? Remember the Bible tells me so. Right? You know, I think we could take that song and we could apply it to all kinds of places in our life, can't we?

What if we change and we added a few of our own verses? I am sinful. This I know. Because the Bible tells me so.

Hell awaits me. This I know. This I know. Not because I feel it. But because God says it. The Bible tells me so. I need mercy.

[19 : 52] This I know. For the Bible tells me so. Jesus loves me. This I know. For the Bible tells me so.

He will save me. This I know. For the Bible tells me so. I must follow.

This I know. For the Bible tells me so. God says we've all sinned. God says we all fall short of his glory.

God says the payment for our sin is death and hell. And we may not always emotionally grasp that and sense it. And sometimes we let a lack of emotional feeling prevent us from actually acknowledging the truth of what God has said.

Ultimately we don't exercise faith because of how we feel. But because God has spoken. And somewhere along Bartimaeus' life he had learned about those prophecies about the son of David.

[20 : 59] Somewhere along his life he understood the depths of his own sin. And though he didn't know everything there was to know. He at least knew in that moment when he was crying out to Jesus. The thing he was primarily crying out for was mercy.

He needed mercy from the Lord. And look that has to be our cry. That has to be our cry. Lord before anything else whatever you do. I know I need your mercy.

Because I am unworthy. I've fallen short. And I know that. Not because. Not because of the way that I compare myself to the people around me.

Or because I feel it in my spirit. But because I trust your word. And your word says it's so. And maybe some of us what we really need to do day by day even as believers.

Is pray that God would give us the same profound clarity that he had given Bartimaeus. To constantly remind us. Isn't this why we come to the table so often?

[21 : 54] It's a constant reminder of our need for God's mercy. And Jesus's power to give it. And so his cry was insightful. Then we see it's persistent.

That was the longest part of the sermon. I promise. We're going to fly now. All right. Then it's persistent. Verse 48. Notice what the crowd does as Bartimaeus cries out.

The crowd rebuked him. Many rebuked him. Telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more. Son of David. Have mercy on me.

The crowd saw Bartimaeus as an irritating disruption. Many of them tried to silence him in frustration. But what was Bartimaeus' response?

You know what? I'm going to cry out even harder. That's what he does. Even more. Son of David. Son of David. Have mercy. There's persistence here.

[22 : 51] Is this not what Jesus meant when he said that the kingdom is something people take by force? There's a persistence to him. He didn't care about the crowd. He didn't care what they thought.

He didn't care about their rebukes or their jeers. All he cared about because his faith was so strong. What he cared about is Jesus was passing by. Jesus could meet his need. And he was going to do anything that he could to get Jesus' attention in that moment.

Why do you suppose he's so persistent? I'll tell you. He was convinced of who Jesus was. He was convinced. It was his faith that produced his persistence.

And you know, it's incredible how determined we will be to know and obey the Lord when our faith is strong in who he is and what he can do in our lives. And if you're sensing a particular apathy in your life right now as far as spiritual things are concerned, maybe you just need to go back to the basics and be renewed and refreshed on the truth of who Jesus is and what he can do and how unworthy you are of all of it.

And perhaps by God's grace and the work of his Holy Spirit, he will flood your heart and cause you to cry out once again and anew, Lord, have mercy. Have mercy on me.

[24 : 06] It's quite the sight Bartimaeus had. Can you see? Can you see like him? We see his desperate cry.

Secondly, look at his compassionate Savior. Verse 49, and Jesus stopped and said, call him. And they called the blind man saying to him, take heart, get up.

He's calling you. Throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. So it's here that we see the heart of Jesus once again, don't we?

I remember last week in verse 32, we learned that Jesus was resolutely determined to fulfill his mission in Jerusalem.

And I thought for a moment, you know, sometimes maybe us dads are worse about that than the moms. But we get on a long road trip and we try to make sure everybody uses the bathroom before you leave the house.

[25 : 05] You know what I mean? And you get on the road because once you start, you don't want to stop. And they're just going to have to hold it until you can get to a place that you're comfortable with stopping. Because you're ready to get there, right? You're determined.

You're resolute. You're pushing forward. That's the sense that we get of Jesus, that he's pushing forward. Everything about what Mark is saying in the verses leading up to that is he's determined. The disciples are amazed by how he is pressing forward and focused on this atoning work that he would make.

He goes out of his way to show the pressure and demand that Jesus had faced in his travels. But amid all of this effort and determination, what was it that Jesus stopped for?

What was so important that he brought the entire parade of people in Jericho to a grinding halt? Why would he stop?

It was insignificant, destitute, blind Bartimaeus. That's why he stopped. The whole crowd either ignored him or rebuked him.

[26 : 23] Jesus called him. He stopped everything. What do we learn again about Jesus? This is his heart. This is his heart, as we've said so often, for sinners and sufferers.

It's on full display here with Bartimaeus. Everything stops so that he can address this man. We've quoted Dane Orland a lot as we've looked at these miracle passages.

I'll do it again. He says, time and again, it is the morally disgusting, the socially reviled, the inexcusable and undeserving, who do not simply receive Christ's mercy, but to whom Christ most naturally gravitates.

He is by his enemy's testimony, the friend of sinners. And if there's two massive things I want you to see in this passage, it's that your own need for Christ's mercy and his own willingness to give it to you.

No matter who you are, no matter how destitute you are, insignificant you may be, or no matter what sins you've committed in your past, he is a compassionate, loving Savior.

[27 : 36] And we see in this passage, it's one thing for us to cry out to Jesus. It's a whole other thing when he calls us, isn't it? Can you imagine what Bartimaeus felt in this moment?

One moment, there's this boisterous crowd coming by. Maybe enough people to be somewhat deafening as they're passing by blind Bartimaeus here.

And he cries out, and now they're rebuking him, and there's more noise around him. But now all of a sudden, everything's still and silent. Everyone stops moving. No one's talking.

But Bartimaeus can't see that. He can't see actually what's happening in front of him. All he can do is listen. And all of a sudden, maybe because of the stillness and the quiet, maybe his own cries have now softened up.

Maybe he's quietened up himself, unsure of what's happening around him. And somebody says through the silence, Bartimaeus, don't just sit there. He's calling for you.

[28 : 38] And I can just picture in my mind this man sitting on the road. And after going through all of this, almost having to take a moment to let what that person said sink into his mind.

What? What do you mean? Bartimaeus, he's calling for you. Bartimaeus, he wants you.

He stopped this whole thing. Why are you just sitting there? He's calling. He wants you. Come to him. Can you imagine what he felt?

Isn't that what Jesus does? He passes by us. And he stops everything else. And he calls us.

We're groping in darkness. And Jesus says, come to me. Come to me. And what is it that Bartimaeus does in that moment?

[29 : 38] This is unbelievable for a blind man. He springs up. He springs up. He throws off his cloak. Acknowledging the call of Christ, he leaves everything behind and immediately rushes to Jesus.

This is such a wonderful picture of the gospel and someone responding to Christ, someone being saved. By God's grace, someone tells them that Jesus is calling.

By faith, they leave everything behind. And they run to him. Do you remember when you did that? Do you remember when somebody said, Jesus is calling?

And by faith in that moment, you left everything behind. Every sin. Every other way you were pursuing. Every other desire of your heart. You left it all behind and you ran to him.

Why? Because he called you. And I want you to listen real close to everybody. Kids, everybody, give me your eyes, okay? Give me your eyes. I know you've heard this a million times before.

[30 : 46] And I want you to hear it again. And I want you to let this sink into your heart right now. Jesus loves you.

He loves you. He wants you. He wants you despite you.

He really does. And through his word, he's calling you. He's calling. And what he's calling you to do is exactly what Bartimaeus did.

Keep your cloak on, but leave everything else behind. And come to Jesus. Now, I think it's time for you to finally come to him in faith.

No more sitting on the roadside begging. Jesus is passing by. You may not get another chance to cry out.

[31 : 56] He's a compassionate Savior. Number three, we see a simple faith. Verse 51. Jesus said to him, what do you want me to do for you? The blind man said to him, Rabbi, let me recover my sight.

We've already talked a lot about Bartimaeus' faith. There's just a couple of notes about it that I want to make in relation to this verse. First, I want you to see that his faith was personal. It was personal.

It was personal. Do you notice how Bartimaeus addressed Jesus? I want to draw your attention to something that may not be so evident in the text that you have, the English text that you have.

And I actually think that it may be important enough that you may want to make a note of it in the side of your Bible. I think this is really important here. If you don't have a New American Standard, your English Bible probably says simply, Rabbi.

That's what my ESV says. If you have an NASB, it probably says something different. It probably says Rabbini. And that's an important distinction. Bartimaeus used an intensified form of Rabbi.

[33 : 03] In the Greek, it's Rabuni. Rabuni. Rabbini is how we would say it. It conveys an endearing sense of lordship and belonging.

My Lord is what it is. My teacher. My master. It's personalizing this address that he's making. This word is only used two times in all of the Bible.

Bartimaeus is one of them. The other one is in John chapter 20 and verse 16. Mary Magdalene. Do you remember after Jesus' resurrection, she's weeping in the garden? And she hears somebody behind her.

She thinks it's the gardener. And he says, Mary. And she immediately recognizes the Lord's voice. And she turns around and seeing him. And what she says is, Rabbini. Rabbini.

My Lord. My teacher. My master. My God. In extant Jewish literature, it's never used as an address for another human being.

[34 : 02] Rabbi is, not Rabbini. Rabbini is only used in Jewish literature to refer to God in prayer. Lord. This isn't a specific address that Bartimaeus is making here.

My Lord. He wasn't saying that Jesus is a Lord. He wasn't saying that Jesus is even the Lord. He's saying Jesus is his Lord. And true conversion is seen when an individual moves from viewing Jesus abstractly as a Lord among many Lords.

Or even just intellectually as the Lord. And even acknowledging that in an intellectual sense. True conversion happens when a person moves from that to where they're now saying, My Lord.

My Savior. He's mine. And I am his. Bartimaeus' faith wasn't merely intellectual. It was real. It was personal.

And so it is with everyone who truly knows Christ as Lord. He's not the Savior. He's my Savior. He's our Savior. But it was also humble. His faith was personal.

[35 : 09] And it was humble. Now especially observant readers will recognize this question that Jesus asked. What do you want me to do for you? It's verbatim what Jesus asked James and John in verse 36.

Look at it while you've got your Bible open there. Remember they said we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you. And he said to them, what do you want me to do for you? But the responses between the brothers and Bartimaeus are worlds apart here.

The brothers' request was extravagant. Bartimaeus' was humble. James and John wanted glory and power in the kingdom. Bartimaeus just wanted to see.

I'm not asking you for a throne. I just want to see, Lord. Will you help me see? It's amazing how our prayers and our requests to God will change when we recognize our true condition and what he can do to meet them.

I just want to see, Lord. It's a humble faith. Our kids are learning a song in their discipleship class right now called With Simple Faith. Oh, listen, hear the Savior call.

[36 : 27] He welcomes now the least of these. His mercies are a fountain full. Oh, precious sinner, come and drink. Only trust him.

Only trust him. Turn to Jesus now. He will save you. He will save you. With Simple Faith. With Love and Grace.

With Simple Faith and Childlike Trust. Finally, we're done. Notice his miraculous healings. Notice healings is plural here.

Verse 52. Jesus said to him, Go your way. Your faith has made you well. And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Bartimaeus received much more from Jesus than he anticipated. There were two healings in one moment. The first was he recovered his sight.

[37 : 28] Says it plainly. Immediately he recovered his sight. He could see. Perhaps for the first time in his life. He could see. But there was a spiritual healing here.

Jesus uses this phrase. It's the same phrase he used for the woman with the hemorrhage in chapter 5. Your faith has made you well. Your faith has saved you. There's a double meaning to the word that's used here.

And it's emphasized in the Gospels. He's not only referring to his physical sight. He's referring to his spiritual salvation here. And we know that that's true because of the way Bartimaeus responded.

Now think about this. You've been blind your whole life perhaps. Jesus comes by. And he heals your sight. You can see for the first time. What do you do then?

Run around the city. See all the things that could only be described to you up to that point. It's not what Bartimaeus does. What does he do? He followed him on the way.

[38 : 29] A sign of a true disciple. There was a real change. This was salvation. And it's a picture that Mark wants us to see.

When Jesus calls and we answer him in faith, we follow him on the way. That's what a true disciple does. James Edwards says this.

I find it helpful. Jesus has transformed Bartimaeus from a beggar beside the road to a disciple on the road. Faith that does not lead to discipleship is not saving faith.

Whoever asks of Jesus must be willing to follow Jesus, even on the uphill road to the cross. And I think the most appropriate way for us to conclude our study today is with a question.

Here it is. Can you see? Can you see? I know you can see me. But do you have the eyes of faith?

[39 : 40] And I want you to consider something as we close. Jesus never passed through Jericho again after that day. He went to Jerusalem. He died.

He rose from the dead. We see him in Galilee and in Jerusalem. That's it. He's not going back to Jericho. This was Bartimaeus' only opportunity to cry out to Jesus for mercy.

And the truth is that we can't be sure ever to have the truth of Jesus and his gospel pass us by at another time. But through his word, he's calling you.

What a shame it would be to remain begging on the side of the road while the Savior is calling for you to follow him and receive his grace.

He loves you. He's calling you. Won't you come? Won't you come? Won't you come?