

Blind Bartimaeus Luke 18:35-43

(Note-Overheads are in Bold Print)

Recent Parable Series. Context. Examples. In Chapter 18 of Luke, Jesus teaches two parables, followed by two lessons from interactions with children and a rich man and concludes the chapter with a demonstration that brings these lessons to life. Let's do a quick journey through these parables and see how Christ completes the lessons with His healing of Blind Bartimaeus.

The first parable of Luke 18 is about prayer. We read about a judge who does not fear God or respect man. But a widow keeps coming to him, again and again wanting legal protection. She wears him out

"For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'" Luke 18:4-6

The lesson for prayer is persistence- "will not God bring about Justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night?" But He finishes the parable with the following challenge: will there be faith when He comes? He is and will be looking for people with faith. He honors people of faith.

"However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8

The next parable is about the Pharisee and the Publican. A story of one who trusted in himself and his righteousness and viewed others with contempt. We all should know this story. One praying and thanking God that he was not a lowlife like others especially like the tax collector who was praying in the temple at the same time. The tax collector simply prayed:

"Be merciful to me, the sinner!" Luke 18:13b

The lessons here that no one is justified in God's sight except by His mercy. He is our greatest need, and we need His mercy, and we are justified by acknowledging our need for Him, and being granted mercy.

There is also inserted into the text a story about not hindering the children from coming to Him and once again the lesson is about faith and necessity for childlike trust in God.

The next interaction is with the Rich Young Ruler who asks how to inherit eternal life. His claim to the kingdom is based on his keeping the commandments, but when challenged by Jesus to sell everything, distribute to the poor and follow him, his true love became evident.

"But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was very wealthy" Luke 18:23

So, Jesus has taught the lessons for persistent calling on the Lord, the importance of faith especially that like the trust of a child, humbly seeking God for His mercy, and not trusting in our own self-righteousness or self-sufficiency, and value Him over all other things.

Now we come to the encounter of Christ and blind Bartimaeus. We will see once again how well-knit Jesus teachings are with His actions. Christ's life was one continuous display of who God is because He is God on the flesh:

"No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." John 1:18

"And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power." Hebrews 1:3

Jesus and His disciples are traveling from Galilee to Jerusalem, which is over 100 miles. They are approaching Jericho which is about 20 miles from Jerusalem.

"As Jesus was approaching Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road begging, now hearing a crowd going by, he began to inquire what this was. They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he called out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! Those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and commanded that he be brought to Him; and when he came near, He questioned him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And he said, "Lord, I want to regain my sight!" And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight: your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and began following Him, glorifying God; and when all the people saw it, they gave praise to God." Luke 18:35-43

Jesus and His disciples are approaching Jericho and Bartimaeus hears the commotion and asks what is going on. He is informed Jesus is passing by. He begins to call out "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me". He becomes very disruptive by his calling out and was firmly told to keep quiet. But he cried out all the more:

"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Bartimaeus demonstrates the persistence Jesus has taught about and was looking for in those seeking Him. He continues to keep calling on Christ, in spite of the disciple's disapproval. He does not give up "Jesus, Son of David" ... What have we learned from scripture:

"You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart, I will be found by you," declares the LORD." Jer. 29:13

Bartimaeus demonstrates the faith Jesus is looking for but also great spiritual insight, by calling Him, Son of David. Son of David was a title for the Messiah. It shows his understanding of the

scriptures. If what I have heard of this man is true, He is the promised one. God promised in the Scriptures that the Messiah would come from the lineage of David:

- **Isaiah 11:1,2** Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him. The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
- **Jer. 23:5** Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.”
- **Jer. 33:15** In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the Earth.
- **Is. 9:6,7** For a child will be born to us, a son will give to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders and His name will be called Wonderful, counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore.

Both Matthew and Luke document the genealogy of Christ to show that he is a descendant of David and that He fulfills the prophecies of OT. In our encounters, it is necessary and helpful to be able to “connect the dots” of scripture. To show them whenever we can how the Old and the New fit together and the bible is truly God’s Word.

We now see Bartimaeus demonstrate one more of the lessons of Jesus. He asks for mercy. He believes Christ is Messiah and because he does, he knows what He is able to do, but not because he deserves it. Jesus commands that he be brought to him:

“What do you want Me to do for you?” Luke 18:41

Wow! What a question to be asked by Jesus. “What do you want Me to do for you?”

Moment for Mark’s account of Bartimaeus in Mark 10, we see that just before Jesus meets Bartimaeus, we learn other lessons from Jesus-- responding to the sons of Zebedee requests:

“We want you to do for us whatever we ask of you” Mark 10:35

“What do you want Me to do for you?” Mark 10:36

What did they want-places of honor in heaven? You would think the disciples would have grown a little more than this by now. Does Jesus grant us everything we want? Caution here. Modern teaching-Name it and claim it. “We want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” Is that asking for mercy? Do we have any right to approach God in that way? Should we not mar-

vel that we can even call on His Name. God's purpose in afflictions, Paul, Joni, personal experience-result. God's answers are always what is best for us and for His increase in our life. Jesus reply to James and John--NO

"But to sit on My right and on my left, this is not Mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared" Mark 10:40

The other disciples began to grumble about James and John-the result another well-deserved lesson from Jesus:

"Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Mark 10:43-45

Back to Luke 18-Jesus has asked him the same exact question as His closest disciples. What do you want me to do for you? Bartimaeus does not seek honor; he asks for mercy, he wants his sight back, and knowing that Christ is Messiah, he demonstrates faith by knowing Christ can do that. Christ has taught His disciples several precepts-now He shows it

"Receive your sight, your faith has made you well." Luke 18:42

Jesus asked, "Will there be faith when he returns." We see here how He honors faith, He honors those who believe Who He is and What He can do, and those who know they do not deserve His love but call for mercy. Christ grants his request. Bartimaeus receives his sight, and uses his sight to follow Christ. When God answers our prayers, are we quick to give Him praise, and desire to follow closer to Him? Quote from Tabletalk magazine on this passage:

"This is the desire of all who are given eyes to see and ears to hear the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Gospel-True faith, we follow Christ.

The past two weeks the lessons were centered on some piercing questions by Jesus:

"Whom are you seeking." "Do you love (Agape) Me?"

"What do you want Me to do for you."

How we would answer this question will say a lot about our understanding of God.

Encounters-In our understanding are we communicating the truths of faith and our need for mercy. Do people understand they are blind without Christ, they need spiritual eyesight, they need the forgiveness of God, that comes only from the Son of David, The Messiah, Son of God, Jesus Christ. We must trust God to reveal these truths to them that they may also cry out "Son of David, have mercy on me" Jesus, have mercy on me.

Unbeliever here today? Calling out for Jesus? Mercy? All your heart? If you are. He asks. WHAT...? Eyes of faith, Forgiveness, new heart, born of You. Will He not say? Receive your sight, your faith has made you well.” Now Follow Me

New Believer: hear his precious words again: Your faith has made you well. Now follow Me.
(Don't we all need to hear that again)

How do we respond to this question today? What would it be like to stand before Jesus and have Him asks us- “What do you want me to do for you?” How we respond indicates our understanding of God and our “Agape” love for God. How do we respond today? Are our hearts full of who God is? Do we echo the Words of Paul in Romans 11:33. Do we pray as Psalmist in Psalm 119-He understood the great benefit of God's influence, the benefit of God, the God of His Word?

“Revive me, according to Your Word, strengthen me according to Your Word, Your Salvation according to Your Word, teach me according to Your Word, sustain me according to Your Word, Deliver me according to Your Word.” Ps. 119

God has taught us how to pray in His Word, Lord's prayer, we have access, not WWW, but GOD

- **“So, I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.” Luke 11:9**
- **“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” Luke 11:13**
- **“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...” Gal. 5:22**
- **“Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.” Colossians 3:1-2**
- **“...we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Cor. 4:18**
- **“You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives...” James 4:2-3**

Oaks, If Christ asks our church today “What do you want Me to do for you”, What are we asking for? Are we keeping an eternal perspective in the things we ask? Are we showing our concern others in the things we ask? Is it our greatest desire for more of Him? For His Glory? Are we desiring to make Him known to others? Why not ask Christ for what He has promised to

do? What we know He can do and will do? Wisdom-James/Testimony. More Christlikeness? Deeper Fruits of the Spirit? That Oaks would rightly represent and display Christ to SB and beyond. Will He not respond...

“Receive your sight, your faith has made you well.”

Closing... “What do you want me to do for you” In sharing this question this week with two different members of our church-I was touched by their immediate response, “No, I need to ask Him what can I do for You, and the other one, another older or should I say, “Vintage Saint” - and always an example and mentor to me, his response was

“What can I still do for you?”

Closing Prayer

Benediction

“Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; to the only wise God through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever.” Romans 16:25-27