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“Lord, I Want To See!”

LUKE 18:35-43

Introduction

1. I think all of us love stories that have happy endings.
2. We find ourselves pulling for the person who is confronted with what seem to be insurmountable obstacles.
3. But then through their own determined persistence and events which work in their favor, they are able to overcome.
4. We rejoice with them and perhaps shed tears of joy on their behalf.
5. Today, we encounter such a story.
6. It is about a blind man who wanted desperately to see again.
7. The Holy Spirit saw fit to have this event included in each of Matthew, Mark and Luke’s gospels.
8. It is here for us for a reason. Let’s study it and see what God wants us to learn.
9. It begins with Jesus “approaching Jericho . . .” (Luke 18:35).
10. Jericho marked the last stage of our Lord’s journey to Jerusalem.
11. From Jericho, Jesus and His disciples would turn west and begin the eighteen mile journey up through the rugged hill country to the city of David.
12. In Jesus’ day, there were actually two cities of Jericho.
13. The ancient city of Jericho was the first city defeated by Joshua and the Israelites when they entered the promised land over 1,400 years earlier.
14. One mile south of this city was the new Jericho, built by Herod the Great as the site of his winter palace.
15. It was this new city of Jericho that Jesus and His disciples were entering on this occasion.

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I. Meet Bartimaeus

A. A MAN WITH A DIFFICULT LIFE

“ . . . a blind man was sitting by the road begging” (Luke 18:35b).

1. He was blind.
 - a. Luke doesn't tell us how long he had been blind.
 - b. Based upon what we read in verse 41, it seems there was a time when he could see.
 - c. We aren't told at what point in his life he lost his sight or how much he was able to see before this happened.
 - d. I don't know which would be worse:
 - 1) To have been born blind, never having the ability to see.
 - 2) To have seen but then lost your sight at some point.
 - e. The American author, Helen Keller, who was both blind and deaf, was once asked, "Isn't it terrible to be blind?"
 - f. She responded, "Better to be blind and see with your heart, than to have two good eyes and see nothing."
 - g. There is something worse than blindness — it is not knowing that you are blind.
 - h. Multitudes in our world today are blind to their darkness . . .
 - 1) blind to their sin
 - 2) blind to their destiny
 - 3) blind to their hopelessness
 - i. Every time we sin we make ourselves more blind — we become less able to recognize what sin is and less likely to realize we are sinners.

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2. He survived by begging.
 - a. Each day was the same for “Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus” (Mark 10:46).

- b. He would get up, gather what few possessions he had along with his walking stick, and begin making his way to his usual spot perhaps not far from the city gate.
- c. As he tapped his way along, he would very likely beg some of those who knew him for a piece or two of bread or whatever leftover food they might have.
- d. When he reached his spot, he would sit down and listen to the people passing by and the things they were saying.
- e. All the while he continued to ask those who came his way for anything they might spare him to sustain him for that day.
- f. This was his life, everyday, and would be until he was no more.

Slide 3**B. A MAN WHOSE LIFE WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE**

1. Bartimaeus had learned to recognize every sound as it passed by.
2. He could tell the difference between a donkey and an ox as it pulled a cart down the street.
3. He knew the familiar sound of camel's hooves as they moved along the road.
4. He listened to the women who were on their way to the market or to draw water, and the men discussing the latest news from Jerusalem.
5. The Feast of Passover was quickly approaching and the crowds were making their way to the city of David for this holy event.
6. As always there was excitement in the air and he called out to the passersby hoping they might be a little more generous at this time of the year.
7. Something was different about today and he picked up on it as he listened to the crowd going by.
8. He asked those around him what was going on.
9. "They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by" (Luke 18:37).
10. No doubt, Bartimaeus had heard about this man and about those whom He had healed.
11. Perhaps he had even heard first person accounts from those who had

been the recipients of such healings.

12. He knew that if he were to ever be healed, today had to be that day.

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II. Bartimaeus' Plea

A. "JESUS, SON OF DAVID, HAVE MERCY ON ME!" (V. 38).

"And he called out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Luke 18:38, NASB95)

1. This blind beggar saw what others could not see.
2. While others saw only a miracle working teacher who hailed from the city of Nazareth, Bartimaeus saw much more.
3. He saw God's anointed one, the promised Messiah, the "Son of David".
4. This is the only time in his Gospel that Luke utilizes this title.

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5. It looked back over 1,000 years to a promise which God made first to David and then to his son Solomon (1 Kings 9:4-5).

"As for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, just as I promised to your father David, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'" (1 Kings 9:4-5, NASB95)

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6. It was a promise which God reinforced through His prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6-7).

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, 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. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.” (Isaiah 9:6–7, NASB95)

7. Not only was Jesus a “Son of David,” He was also “the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:16).

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8. Prior to Jesus being conceived in Mary’s womb, the angel Gabriel had appeared to her and told her of the son she was to conceive through the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:31,32).

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;” (Luke 1:32, NASB95)

9. Now, Bartimaeus wanted to get to Jesus, but he couldn’t because of the crowd, so, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”
9. Do you remember the plea of the tax collector who went up to the Temple to pray?
10. He “was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’” (Luke 18:13).
11. It was this same plea which came from the lips of the ten lepers in the village between Samaria and Galilee: “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” (Luke 17:13).
12. Every one of us here today need that same mercy.

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B. THE CROWD’S RESPONSE

“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!”” (Luke 18:39, NASB95)

1. Those at the head of the crowd were annoyed by Bartimaeus’ pleas.

2. They “were sternly telling him to be quiet” (v. 39).
3. I imagine their responses to Bartimaeus were something like . . .
 - a. “Keep quiet”
 - b. “Shut up.”
4. Regardless of what they said, Bartimaeus paid them no attention.
5. He needed Jesus because only He could restore sight to his blind eyes.
7. He began “crying out all the more” (v. 39b).
 - a. Luke uses a different word in the Greek (*ekrazen*) to describe what Bartimaeus was doing.
 - b. No longer was he shouting, now he began to scream at the top of his lungs, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” (v. 39c).
8. It was at this point that “Jesus stopped and commanded that he [Bartimaeus] be brought to Him” (v. 40a).
 - a. Long before this day, Jesus had set His face to go to Jerusalem.
 - b. Nothing could stop Him, nothing could deter Him from His destination, except, the pleas of a blind beggar.
9. In his gospel, Mark adds, “And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him here.” So they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you.” Throwing aside his cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus” (Mark 10:49-50, NASB95).

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III. Bartimaeus’ Encounter With Jesus

A. WHAT BARTIMAEUS REQUESTED

““What do you want Me to do for you?” And he said, “Lord, I want to regain my sight!”” (Luke 18:41, NASB95)

1. When Bartimaeus came to Jesus, He asked him, “What do you want Me to

do for you?”

2. Bartimaeus knew exactly what he wanted, “Lord, I want to regain my sight!”
3. He wanted to see again — to see . . .
 - a. a Judean sunrise across the Sea of Galilee.
 - b. the majestic Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.
 - c. the faces of his loved ones gathered around him.

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B. WHAT BARTIMAEUS RECEIVED

“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 18:42-43, NASB95).

1. Imagine what it must have been like for Bartimaeus.
2. When Jesus first began to speak to him he was blind, but when He finished, Bartimaeus could see!
3. What was the first thing he saw? I believe it was the face of our Lord.
5. Jesus told Bartimaeus “your faith has made you well” (v. 42b).
 - a. His faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah.
 - b. His faith in God’s only Son to set Him free from his years of darkness.
6. Wouldn’t you like to have been in the crowd that day . . .
 - a. To see Bartimaeus’ excitement over having received his sight.
 - b. To see him glorifying God as he followed Jesus on His way to Jerusalem.
 - c. To be a part of that jubilant crowd as they too joined in his praise.

Conclusion

1. What are you and I to learn from this encounter between Bartimaeus and

Jesus?

2. First, we must see our need.
 - a. Bartimaeus knew he was blind and that he wanted to see.
 - b. Are you blind to your sin this morning? Blind to your hopelessness?
 - c. Please know that all of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23).
 - d. Ask God to help you see your need.
 3. Second, we need to see who Jesus is.
 - a. He is the Savior of the world (John 4:42).
 - b. He is the only way to heaven (John 14:6).
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4. Third, we must come to Him in trusting, obedient faith.
 - a. He calls us to Himself: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28, NASB95)
 - b. "And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation," (Hebrews 5:9, NASB95)