

- C. His earnest appeal: "And Jesus answered him, and said, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And the blind man said unto him, Rabboni (My great Master), that I may receive my sight" (51; cf. John 20:16).
1. His need was great, his opportunity brief, and he came "boldly to the throne of grace" for mercy (Heb. 4:16).
 2. God desires his children to ask in faith for the supply of all our needs (1 Tim. 2:4-6; Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 4:19).
 3. Jesus knew his need but wanted him to particularize it.
 4. God knows our needs but desires us to express them (Phil. 4:6).
- D. His blessing: "And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And straightway he received his sight" (52a).
1. The faith that (a) inquired of Jesus, (b) brought him to the Healer, (c) confessed him, (d) cried out for mercy, (e) refused to be hindered, and (f) sprang up to come to Jesus, asking for sight, is active faith.
 2. The faith that saves is the faith that acts to receive divine grace, refusing to be discouraged from coming to Jesus by any weight or sin.

IV. THE FAITH THAT SAVES FOLLOWS JESUS "IN THE LIGHT"
(Mark 10:52b; Luke 18:43).

- A. "And followed him in the way" (52b; cf. 1 John 1:7).
1. "And immediately he received his sight; and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God" (Luke 18:43).
 2. His faith became a means of influencing others to follow Christ and glorify God.
- B. "The story is past in time, but it is eternal in truth. Bartimaeus is the soul of humanity struggling for the light"--Lang, quoted by Lockyer, p. 235.
- C. "The effect of blindness in a man reveals itself in many ways: (1) In not seeing whither he is going (1 John 2:11); (2) In getting in the way of others and leading others wrong (Luke 6:39); (3) In missing all the beauty of light and walking in darkness (John 8:12); (4) In knowing nothing of the glorious things above and around (2 Kings 6:17)."--Lockyer, p. 235.

STUDIES IN MARK--LESSON THIRTY-ONE

The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus

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

INTRODUCTION -

I. LESSON LINKS AND CONTEXT.

- A. The time of this lesson was about one week before Jesus was crucified, A.D. 30.
- B. Jesus was on his final journey to Jerusalem before his death. Luke wrote that he "drew nigh unto Jericho" (18:35), evidently entering from the eastern gate, having crossed the Jordan.

II. NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LESSON.

- A. The earthly ministry of Jesus was nearly ended. His disciples and a multitude were going with him to keep the Passover (Mark 10:46).
- B. According to Isaiah the prophet, he was to give sight to blind eyes (29:17,18; 35:5; 42:7), and this lesson tells us that he did.
- C. Matthew tells of two blind men healed, Mark and Luke of one, the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46), evidently the one best known. Since there were two healed, it is no discrepancy to mention the most prominent one. This was also the case with the two demoniacs (Matthew 8:28-34).
- D. The seeming discrepancy posed by two evangelists reporting the healing as Jesus departed from Jericho, whereas Luke tells it as an event which occurred as he entered the city, is not so easily explained. Obviously there is some fact or circumstance not reported, as in many other cases, which, if known to us, would easily harmonize the narrative. Luke reports the Lord's encounter with the blind man as a completed story, started and finished, as he entered the city. However, with the added information given by Matthew and Mark, we are led to believe "the cure was actually effected on coming out of the city" (Lamar), after the intervening events recorded in Luke 19:1-28. McGarvey and Pendleton think the man first approached Jesus as he entered from the east, then passed around the wall of Jericho and stationed himself at the Southern gate, out of which Jesus would depart toward Jerusalem, and there according

to Matthew and Mark, the miracle of healing occurred as Jesus "went out from Jericho." It is also reasonable to believe that one blind man was healed as Jesus entered the city, and another received his sight as Jesus left Jericho.

- E. The outstanding lesson from this case of healing is the confirming power to our faith by the amazing power and compassion of the Great Physician to give sight to blind eyes. From this we learn of his ability to give us that greater spiritual vision and light from God.
- F. This is an outstanding example of the nature of the faith that saves (Mark 10:52; Luke 18:42,43).

DISCUSSION -

I. THE BLIND MAN'S TRUE CONDITION: IN DARKNESS (10:46).

A. "And they come to Jericho" (46a).

That historic city was a few miles west of the Jordan, and about 18 or 20 miles northeast of Jerusalem.

B. A blind beggar, sitting by the way: "And as he went out from Jericho, with his disciples and a great multitude, the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the wayside" (Mark 10:46b).

- 1. Great crowds from Galilee and elsewhere were going up to the feast.
- 2. Luke 19:1-28 shows he spent some time in Jericho.
- 3. Bartimaeus, being both blind and a beggar, was a pitiful sight which moved Jesus with compassion (Matthew 20:34).

C. The man was blind, knew his helpless condition, and was thereby led to ask for the blessings which his blindness had denied him.

- 1. It is doubtful that any sinner can have the faith that saves until he realizes his true helpless and desperate condition.
- 2. Spiritual blindness is much worse than physical, though people thus afflicted often are deceived and consider the Bible a dull, useless book (cf. John 9:39-41; Luke 15:17-19; Matt. 5:3; Titus 3:5-7; Ephesians 2:8-10).
- 3. Consider when people fail to realize their true spiritual condition (Rev. 3:14-22; Eph. 2:11,12).

II. THE FAITH THAT SAVES CRIES TO GOD OUT OF DARKNESS (Mark 10:47,48; Luke 18:36-38).

A. Jesus, have mercy: "And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out, and say,

Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me" (47).

- 1. Though without sight, he heard the noise of the crowd going by with Jesus, and, realizing his great opportunity, he began to "cry out."
- 2. The faith that saves is the faith that inquires, searching nobly, using whatever ability and opportunity he has to "receive" from God's instrument of light and salvation what he needs (John 7:17; Matt. 13:22; 25:14-30; 7:7-11).
- 3. By using the title, "Jesus, thou son of David," the man virtually confessed his faith in him as the Messiah. By using the Jewish designation for Messiah, he "saw" more than many who thought they possessed more vision than he.

B. Cried out more: "And many rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried out the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me"(48).

- 1. The man persevered, as Jacob wrestled, to obtain God's blessing. The faith that saves is a faith that perseveres until the victory is won (Hebrews 11:7, Noah; Matt. 5:6; 1 John 5:4).
- 2. Jesus still motivates cries out of darkness.
- 3. Those who vainly tried to silence the cries of the blind man to Jesus, for whatever reason, are still with us and still trying to hinder the Lord.

III. THE FAITH THAT SAVES RECEIVES THE LIGHT (10:49-52).

A. The Lord's response: "And Jesus stood still, and said, Call ye him. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good cheer: rise, he calleth thee" (49).

- 1. Jesus uses human instruments in dispensing his grace (2 Cor. 4:7).
- 2. Compare John 1:42; Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18.
- 3. Though rebuked by the multitude, the poor man received a cheering response from Jesus.

B. The man's quick response: "And he, casting away his garment, sprang up and came to Jesus" (50).

- 1. Unhindered now by the crowd, he instantly discarded his garment to come to "the light of the world" (cf. Malachi 4:2; John 8:12).
- 2. He would not allow the multitude or anything else to impede him.
- 3. Let us also "lay aside every weight" and come to where we may obtain divine grace (Heb. 12:1,2; Mark 9:43-48).