

Title: The Cry Of A Blind Man

Text: Mark 10:46-52

Date: March 25, 2012

Place: Decatur Church of God

Introduction: What is it like to be blind? How would you know if you were opening a can of green beans, hominy, or tomato soup?

I want to make sure that I wear blue socks with blue pants and black socks with black pants. In my sock drawer I put blue socks on the left end and black socks on the right. But what if I couldn't see to put them in the drawer?

What if I go to my closet and put on brown pants?

Have you ever walked down a street and been hit in the head or face with a low hanging tree branch? What if you couldn't see that branch?

I can certainly understand why someone without vision would desire to have it, if possible.

Mark 10:46-52

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁸Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁹Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." ⁵⁰Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

⁵¹"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

⁵²"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you."

Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Peter Falk (1927-2011) was an actor who spent his career playing a wide range of roles in comedy and drama. Most notably, he played an eccentric, rumbled but always triumphant detective in the hit show "Columbo." In real life Falk had a glass eye, resulting from an operation to remove a cancerous tumor when he was 3. In spite of his missing eye, he was a high school athlete. In one story he liked to tell, after being called out at third base during a baseball game, he removed his eye and handed it to the umpire.

"You'll do better with this," he said.

I. In every city there are those who are blind.

A. At Jericho, they found Bartimaeus.

1. Jericho was a popular resort city rebuilt by Herod the Great in the Judean desert, not far from the Jordan River crossing. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem (Mark 10:32) and he would naturally enter Jericho.

2. Beggars were a common sight in most towns. Because most occupations of that day required physical labor, anyone with a crippling disease or disability was at a severe disadvantage and was usually forced to beg, even though God's laws commanded care for such needy people (Leviticus 25:35-38). Blindness was considered a curse from God for sin (John 9:2), but Jesus refuted this idea when he reached out to heal the blind.

* We have some in our congregation who are considered legally blind. This is a designation based upon their lack of physical vision.

B. In every city can we find those who are spiritually blind?

1. Lost as to the things of God.

2. Bumping into barriers that the world puts in their way.
3. Most threatening is the possibility that their spiritual blindness could lead to death.

II. **Jesus has the power to make a difference.**

* Except for what they had learned from listening to others recite, blind people in that time were illiterate in the law (Braille had not been invented yet, so they could not read). They were thus not respected as religious persons, although they were protected under the Law of Moses. They were also socially powerless, and Jesus' followers view this blind man's loud pleas as an intrusion, the way they had viewed the children (Mark 10:13). The disciples may have viewed Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem as a royal procession, and it was foolhardy and impudent to interrupt a royal procession.

A. Obviously, Bartimaeus had heard of Jesus and his miracles.

Mark 8:22-25

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him.

²⁵Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

Mark 9:17, 22, 25, 27

¹⁷A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech.

²²"It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."

27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.

B. You would think that there is enough blindness in our culture that we would seek out someone who can change it.

* Think about it for a minute. Politically we are seeking answers to the overwhelming issues of our day (unemployment, health care, homosexuality, and abortion just to name a few).

Candidates for political office are claiming to have the answers but they are not really sure of the real question.

How do I find my way to God?

III. **The needy person who is wise will not give up calling upon Jesus.**

By “stopping” and standing still, Jesus allows the blind man to come to where Jesus’ voice had last sounded. The “cloak” (Mark 10:50) is an outer garment, used as a coat in cold weather and as bedding at night, and might have been spread before him for use in his daytime begging if he had no pouch. It is possible that the act of casting it aside may signify his forsaking dependence on anything else and trusting only in Jesus.

A. Bartimaeus wouldn’t give up; he wanted Jesus to help him.

1. He kept calling out for Jesus until Jesus stopped and responded.
2. When Jesus called, Bartimaeus responded and Bartimaeus was given back his eyesight.

* Alison Ritch, of Birmingham, Alabama writes,

My husband and I were about to start grad school, hoping to squeak through school together living on love and Taco Bell. Charlie had a decent laptop, but my only computer was a three-inch thick 1996 laptop. So for my birthday that July, I decided to ask our families for money for a new laptop. They were quite generous, and I received \$720—enough to buy a nice, new computer.

Before I made my purchase, we took a road trip to visit several college friends. Our old Nissan pick-up—our only car—had broken down shortly before our trip, so we left the truck at the shop and drove a borrowed car. During our trip our mechanic called with the estimate for fixing the truck. It was more than we had expected, and we didn't know where we would get the money. I was so fixated on getting my new laptop, it didn't even occur to me to use the money I'd received for my birthday to fix the truck.

I told a friend when we were out for coffee about my plans to buy a laptop. She had recently gotten a new computer and offered me her old laptop. I still didn't take the hint. I thanked her but dismissed her offer. Her laptop, while several years newer than mine and certainly adequate for the paper-writing I'd be doing, was not the shiny, new computer I'd set my sights on.

Back at the house where we were staying that night, Charlie and I were trying to figure out how we could scrape some money together to fix the truck. Somehow I finally allowed the thought I'd subconsciously been fighting off to enter my head: I could take my friend's old computer and use my birthday money to fix our truck. I knew the Holy Spirit was telling me to surrender my plans, and I knew that insisting on my own way would be saying no to him. So, I yielded to the Spirit's prompting. As soon as I did, it was like the scales on the eyes of my heart fell off as I suddenly remembered the number I had jotted down from the mechanic: \$720. God knew I needed a computer. He also knew we needed a repaired truck. He provided a free computer, and he gave us the exact amount of money—to the dollar—that we needed to fix our truck.

We wrote that story down in a notebook we kept at the time, but not just to remind us of God's supernatural provision. As

much as I rejoiced in God's provision, I was sobered by how blind I was to it for so long when it was right in front of my face. God wanted to bless me. He provided just what I needed in ways I couldn't have anticipated, but my greed almost kept me from receiving that blessing. What a warning to fix my gaze not on what my sinful heart lusts after but on my Father, who withholds no good thing from his children.

IV. What do you want Jesus to do for you?

A. Go, your faith has healed you.

* What is it that has overwhelmed you in life and has made you a beggar?

- † An old sin that has weighed you down and made you live a life filled with guilt
- † A financial obligation that daily worries you
- † A failed relationship that has made your heart ache for years
- † A lack of clarity on a major life decision that has paralyzed you and made you a slave to indecision

B. Find Jesus' help, follow Jesus' way.

Mark 10:52

"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

1. Let's call out to Jesus until we are sure that He hears us.
2. When Jesus responds listen to what He says and do what he says to do.

* Earlier I mentioned a healing that Mark records in his eighth chapter. The man who was blind at Bethsaida. What I didn't spend time with was the method that Jesus used to bring his healing.

Jesus spit into the dirt and used the mud to smear on the man's eyes. YUCK! But the result was an ability to see.

You tell me...how often have you rejected God's healings or God's miracles because you didn't like what God was asking you to do, or you didn't want to go where God wanted you to go, or you didn't want to be the man or woman that God wanted you to be?

Our journey in life is greatly affected by our faith and our faith is evidenced through our obedience.

When Jesus calls, will we come? When he performs a miracle in our lives, will we follow?

It begins with the cry of a blind man.