

## 2024 08 24 Hillingdon Park Baptist Talk

READ Mark 10 v 45-52

**Jericho:** Gateway to Jerusalem. Masses of Jews travel this way every time they go to Jerusalem. Trekking along the river Jordan until they reach Jericho. Then they face the long climb through the hills up to Jerusalem.

So, again, **Jesus is talking** to his disciples about his imminent death and resurrection that will happen when they get to Jerusalem. **The disciples don't understand** Jesus. **The crowd** want to be part of the action. They want to get closer to Jesus. **Bartimaeus and friend** can't see, they are blind. They can't move from the edge of the road for fear of being trampled. All they can do is shout. And that gets a very negative reaction from the crowd, who tell them to shut up. Nobody wants a protest movement!

**Who would you rather be?** A disciple of Jesus, confused about what Jesus is saying? And not understanding. One of the crowd trying to get closer to Jesus? Or a beggar, who is blind, calling out from the sidelines?

**Who does Jesus want to see?** Jesus does not value you because of what you look like, how fit you are, how rich you are. In fact, he reaches out to the sinners, wicked people, the rejects, women, children, disabled, ethnic minorities, religious fanatics, religious leaders and imperialist commanders. He does not like the labels we put on others, he treats each person's individual needs. He wants to see you. He wants to talk with you. He knows your needs better than you do. So Jesus stops and asks for the blind men to be led to him.

**Who had faith?** The disciples, who didn't understand, the crowd who were pushing to get closer, or the man shouting out "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me".

So faith is expressed in them shouting "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me". Maybe Jesus remembered Bartimaeus and friend when he told a story about 2 men going up to the temple to pray. One was full of himself, the other simply said "God, be merciful to me a sinner" You can find that story in Luke 18:9-14.

So we learn that faith is not being in the crowd around Jesus but asking Jesus for mercy.

And **Calling out to Jesus pays off.** Out of all the people in the crowd Jesus picks these two and a

guy called Zaccheus – you can read about him in Luke 19:1-10. Neither were in the crowd, Zacchaeus was up a tree, Bartimaeus was on the roadside, but they, in very different ways, were living out faith.

Jesus said “What do you want me to do?” We know Bartimaeus’ answer, but what is your answer? Jesus says to you “What do you want me to do?” how do you answer?

In Matthew 20:21 & Mark 10:36 Jesus asks the same question. The answer tells you a lot about James and John. They were looking for fame and glory. Bartimaeus was looking for sight. Just previous to this a young man had come to Jesus and asked. What good thing must I do to get eternal life?” Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17-30; Luke 18:18-30 In Luke 19:5. Notice it’s what must I do, not what can Jesus do. That young man went away disappointed, because he didn’t get what he wanted.

James, of James and John, learnt his lesson and in a letter he wrote we read James 4:2-3

*You do not have because you do not ask God.  
³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

Your prayers tell you a lot about yourself.

What do you most want? Health, wealth, happiness or do you want mercy and grace from Jesus? Next time you are praying, stop and think about Bartimaeus and maybe ask for salvation, eternal life, contentment, love, joy, peace, faith, patience and so on.

Bartimaeus' first request was for mercy. In his answer to Jesus' question, he reveals his practical need. He wants to receive his sight. And he believes Jesus can do it.

What is Jesus' response to this?

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

Bartimaeus received mercy that day. His faith was rewarded with a miracle. We are told

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

He was so grateful, he chose to follow Jesus rather than going home to celebrate.

The result was he and everybody around praised God.

So what do we learn from a blind beggar on a roadside?

First, you matter to God.

Second, we should not be put off by others dismissing us.

Thirdly, faith leads to salvation and healing.

Fourthly, we should copy Bartimaeus and pray Jesus have mercy.

Fifthly, its not what I can do for God, but what Jesus has done for me that matters most. So Jesus says to you "What do you want me to do?" how do you answer?

Finally, the best thing to do is to follow Jesus.