

Have you ever seen a lifeguard in action?

They don't need convincing or persuading; all they need to act is to hear the cry for help.

God's mercy is like that

Mercy does not need to be dragged out of God's heart; it rushes toward all who cry out for it

Are you facing a difficult season? Does misery meet you every morning? There is hope for you

Jeremiah in Ch3 of Lamentations describes feeling as if God has turned on him

Lamentations 3:21-24 Yet I call this to mind, and therefore I have hope: ²²Because of the LORD's faithful love we do not perish, for his mercies never end. ²³They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness! ²⁴I say, "The LORD is my portion, therefore I will put my hope in him."

We get a glimpse of such mercy in today's scripture

Ch. 1-7 Who Jesus is (God)

Ch. 11-16 The passion of the Christ

Ch.8-10 What it looks like to follow Jesus (discipleship);

this section is bookended by 2 stories of blindness and the healing of sight

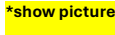
The final leg of the journey to Jerusalem

Mark 10:46 They came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting by the road.

His name= Son of Timaeus; 'son of honor', some scholars suggest possibly also 'son of shame'

Bartimaeus is a man at the bottom

Metaphorically- blind and a beggar (unlike the 1st blind man who has loved ones bring him to Jesus)

Geographically- Jericho sits about 1,000 feet below sea level 

Spiritually- apart from Christ dead in sin (as all are)

His life has been one of misery and affliction- his very character is entwined to darkness and poverty

It raises a question many of us may ask- **Why doesn't God spare us of misery?** (illness, loss, problems)

God may allow deep misery so we might discover deeper mercies

Jeremiah Burroughs- "Name any affliction that is upon you: there is a sea of mercy to swallow it up. If you pour a pailful of water on the floor of your house, it makes a great show, but if you throw it into the sea, there is no sign of it. So, afflictions considered in themselves, we think are very great, but let them be considered with the sea of God's mercies we enjoy, and then they are not so much, they are nothing in comparison."

Psalms 31:7 I will rejoice and be glad in your faithful love because you have seen my affliction.

You know the troubles of my soul

A person is wise who understands that all the rivers of our misery flow into the ocean of God's mercy

Bartimaeus' difficult life seems like a curse, but in fact was a blessing unfolding-

There is a contrast with the rich young ruler from earlier in the chapter.

He had a very good life, but it is that good life that has hindered him from realizing his need for Jesus.

Bartimaeus had a difficult life, but one which has allowed him to recognize his need for Jesus

Mark 10:47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Luke’s account tells us he asked what was going on. They told him ‘Jesus of Nazareth’ was passing by.

But notice his plea-‘Jesus, son of David’..... he is the only person in Mark to refer to Jesus in this way!

2 Samuel 7:12-16 When your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and blows from mortals. ¹⁵ But my faithful love will never leave him as it did when I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and kingdom will endure before me forever, and your throne will be established forever.”

Solomon was the partial fulfillment- but Bartimaeus recognizes, Jesus is the One, the Messiah!

The Pharisees couldn’t see it. The rich young ruler couldn’t see it.

The disciples are struggling to see it. But the irony Mark presents is that a blind beggar saw

What is Bartimaeus’s initial request? MERCY

Did this man understand everything about Jesus; was he a theologian or a scholar? No.

But he knew enough to know that in Jesus there is hope if He would just stop for him

Ephesians 2:4 tells us that God is “rich in mercy”

How did he know this? He’d been deprived of having seen any work of Jesus.

But he had heard. And hearing he believed.

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher?

God has placed Bartimaeus’s in your life; people waiting to hear of God’s mercy for people such as them

Mark 10:48 Many warned him to keep quiet, but he was crying out all the more, “Have mercy on me, Son of David!”

Throughout Mark people keep getting in the way of those seeking Jesus

The children; Jairus; the woman with the issue of blood. And now Bartimaeus

There may be some of you who are on a journey seeking Jesus, but some of those around you (friends, family) may be wanting to give up your search- DON’T

The crowd’s reaction to Bartimaeus is troubling and sad- to silence a person pleading for help?

Christians as individuals, and the Church as a whole must never behave this way

Adrian Rogers “Mercy is compassion in action”

I am grateful and proud of many of you whom I have seen in action of compassion

Dan Burton, Nate- thank you for your compassion in helping others get to church

Church, thank you for your compassion with the CARE offering & to those without homes

Bartimaeus refuses to be quiet because he is desperate; this may be the only chance he has with Jesus
You cannot afford to keep quiet! If necessity presses upon you, cry out!

Mark 10:49 Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.”

So they called the blind man and said to him, “Have courage! Get up; he’s calling for you.”

This is one of the most profound insights in scripture- Jesus stopped.

Remember, Jesus has the cross on His mind; a crowd follows at His heels; the moment for which He came is nearer now more than ever..... BUT HE STOPPED.

For whom? An influential man? respected fellow? A high ranking member of society?

No. For a poor- blind- beggar, for whom no one else stopped for

And He stopped for me! And He stopped for you brother/ sister;

And if you have never known the sweet embrace of the Savior, He stops for you today

What stops God on His tracks? The plea of mercy!

Ill- when one of our kids is sick, we ask my dad to pray, and the first time Mel and I were deeply touched; My dad prayed “We ask you not because we deserve your answer, but because we plead to your mercy”

Jesus heard the cries everyone else drowned out. And He hears you friend.

Alexander MacLaren- “Jesus Christ is no dead Christ who is to be remembered only. He is a living Christ who, at this moment, is all that He ever was, and is doing in loftier fashion all the gracious things that He did upon earth. That pause of the King is repeated now, and the quick ear which discerned the difference between the unreal shouts of the crowd, and the agony of sincerity in the cry of the beggar, is still open... The living Christ is as tender a friend, has as quick an ear, is as ready to help at once, today, as He was when outside the gate of Jericho; and every one of us may lift his or her poor, thin voice, and it will go straight up to the throne, and not be lost in the clamour of the hallelujahs that echo round His seat. Christ still hears and answers the cry of need. Send you it up, and you will find that true.”

Mark 10:50 He threw off his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus.

This is significant, his cloak was used to collect money, he had no other means to make a living

Leaving it behind meant he knew he would no longer need to depend on it,

he now depended on the son of David- the rich young ruler couldn’t leave his riches to follow Jesus and went away grieving, but this man happily leaves all he has

Mark 10:51 Then Jesus answered him, “What do you want me to do for you?”

It may seem like a redundant question- but it’s meant to contrast **Mark 10:36** when the disciples asked for thrones
“*Rabboni*,” the blind man said to him, “I want to see.”

Bartimaeus could’ve asked for money, or food. But he recognized the opportunity for something greater than his next meal

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us— ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Sometimes we settle in our prayer life. We’ve allowed life and difficulty to hamper our communion with God, and we don’t believe He really can do above and beyond all that we ask

I wonder if Bartimaeus in this moment recalled hearing the words of Isaiah read out loud at some point in his life

Isaiah 42:16 I will lead the blind by a way they did not know;

I will guide them on paths they have not known.

I will turn darkness to light in front of them and rough places into level ground.

This is what I will do for them, and I will not abandon them.

Mark 10:52 Jesus said to him, “Go, your faith has saved you.” Immediately he could see and began to follow Jesus on the road.

Notice that he not only saw *immediately* he began to follow Jesus *immediately*

the gift of sight is a gift of discipleship; his first steps would be at the heels of Christ

Some early church traditions say Bartimaeus followed Jesus all the way to His crucifixion and would later become a major figure in the church at Jerusalem

Barclay, “*Christianity begins with a personal reaction to Jesus*”

To that I would add “**Christianity is a lifelong reaction to Jesus**”

I am Bartimaeus. You are Bartimaeus. Sons & daughters of shame turned sons & daughters of honor.

I was blind, but now I see. (2 Corinthians 4)

There is enough mercy in Jesus for a blind poor beggar;

There is enough mercy in Jesus at the bottom.

Enough mercy for the sin you can’t shake.

Enough mercy for the season you’re barely surviving.

Enough mercy... for you and me.

Spurgeon- “*There is nothing little in God; His mercy is like Himself-it is infinite. You cannot measure it. His mercy is so great that it forgives great sins to great sinners, after great lengths of time, and then gives great favours and great privileges, and raises us up to great enjoyments in the great heaven of the great God.*”

God is still stopping at the plea of mercy

Mercy does not need to be dragged out of God’s heart; it rushes toward all who cry out for it

He is inclined to give it generously, freely, eagerly

Will you cry out or remain by the wayside?

Will you cling to your cloak or throw it aside?

Will you settle or ask Him for sight?

CALL UP WORSHIP TEAM

Invitation-

- Receive mercy
- Extend mercy

BULPEN-

This is the last healing miracle in the book

This man can't help himself; opening his eyes won't give him sight

This is the spiritual condition of everyone before Christ stopped for us

Mark translates the man's name but not 'Rabboni' (lord/ teacher)

Bartimaeus= Son of Timaeus and could also mean 'son of honor',

and some scholars have suggested it may also mean son of shame

(<https://christhum.wordpress.com/2009/10/26/the-name-fame-and-shame-of-bartimaeus/>)

Son of David- **Jeremiah 30:9** They will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.
Ezekiel 34:23-24 I will establish over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will shepherd them. He will tend them himself and will be their shepherd. ²⁴I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be a prince among them. I, the LORD, have spoken.
Hosea 3:5 Afterward, the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the last days.

MacLaren- *"Jesus Christ was passing by. He was never to be in Jericho any more. If Bartimaeus did not get His sight then, he would be blind all his days. Christ and His salvation are offered to thee, my brother, now. Perhaps if you let Him pass, you will never hear Him call again, and may abide in the darkness for ever. Do not run the risk of such a fate."*

V52 "Go"...but he doesn't go away, he goes with Jesus

He saw Jesus as He was, himself as he was, and he appeals for mercy and he responds in faith

When mercy halts, faith must not hesitate

Isaiah 42:7

2 Corinthians 4:4 In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Stop for the one- Jesus did

Psalms 17:6 I call on you, God, because you will answer me; listen closely to me; hear what I say.

Psalms 54:2 God, hear my prayer; listen to the words from my mouth.

Psalms 71:2 In your justice, rescue and deliver me; listen closely to me and save me.

Job 42:5 I had heard reports about you, but now my eyes have seen you.

V52 'saved' other translations say 'healed you; made you well' made you whole' - it's the same Greek word from which we get 'savior' and 'salvation'

V49 He's calling for you

Isaiah 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

Garland, "The disciples' answer to this question (10:36) is telling: They want to sit on thrones with Jesus and reign with Him in triumph. Bartimaeus sits in the dust, makes no demand for glory, but cries out from his wretched poverty: He only wants to see."

V46 sitting by the road (way)- there may be some of you here today sitting by the way. Perhaps you may reason 'there will be another opportunity to call out to Jesus; to follow Jesus; to finally throw off the cloak of addiction or despair'.

Hebrews 12:1

Every sinner is a beggar

John 9:39-41 Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, in order that those who do not see will see and those who do see will become blind." ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, "We aren't blind too, are we?" ⁴¹"If you were blind," Jesus told them, "you wouldn't have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

Who is blind? Those who won't see that they need Jesus' healing and saving power

Matthew 20:32-34 Jesus stopped, called them, and said, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³³"Lord," they said to him, "open our eyes." ³⁴Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they could see, and they followed him.

Jesus halts at the plea of mercy

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; though not seeing him now, you believe in him, and you rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy

Spurgeon- "God's mercy is so great that you may sooner drain the sea of its water, or deprive the sun of its light, or make space too narrow, than diminish the great mercy of God"

"The Lord's mercy often rides to the door of our heart upon the black horse of affliction"

Samuel Cradock- "Compare thy mercies and afflictions together. Have not mercies flowed in upon thee like a flood, whereas afflictions have fallen upon thee but like drops? For one affliction, thou hast had an hundred mercies."

V52 MacLaren- "My faith is the hand that grasps His; it is His hand, not mine, that holds me up."