

# Blind Bartimaeus

#0616

Study Given by W D. Frazee—October 24, 1969

This evening let us turn to Mark the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter. I'm so glad the Lord had Matthew, Mark, Luke and John each write the story of the life of Jesus, aren't you? And each one supplies a few details that aren't quite the same with the others.

And here in Mark 10, beginning with the 46<sup>th</sup> verse, we have the story of blind Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus, maybe there's somebody like Bartimaeus here tonight. We'll see.

“And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way” Mark 10:46–52.

I'm impressed as I read this experience that it makes Jesus very happy to give people what they want. That's what He's been working at all through the history of this world. He's been trying to help people find out what they want and let them have it.

In the book *Education*, page 41, I read this significant statement:

“...It is made manifest that a life centered in God is a life of completeness. Every want He has implanted, He provides to satisfy...” *Education*, page 41.

You stop and think about it. Do we get hungry? Oh, yes. Is there anything to satisfy hunger? Plenty: apples, oranges, dates, raisins, beans and lentils, bread and milk, and so on through the long list.

“Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loadeth us with benefits...” Psalm 68:19.

Do we have thirst? Yes, we get thirsty. Anything to satisfy that? Oh, yes. The river of the water of life, literal and spiritual. And so, we might go on with the long list of human wants, and they're quite a list, as I'm sure you recognize. But here is a sweeping statement:

“Every want He has implanted, He provides to satisfy...”  
*Education*, page 41.

Do you mean everything I want I'm going to have? If I'll let the Lord run my life, if I'll come to Him with my wants, that's true, everything I want. Not only all the things I found out about but many more that I don't yet know. For you and I don't yet know how many things we want, friends.

I can illustrate that. Are there any of you that want some things now that you didn't know about 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 30 years ago? Oh, yes. I was thinking not long ago of how little it took to satisfy me 50 or 60 years ago. A big red ball, my, my, that would have just thrilled my soul several years ago. Even a nickel would make me just smile from ear to ear. It'd take a bit more than that now.

Yes, I've found out a good many things I want that I didn't use to know. And I find out as time goes on there are still new stars appearing in the firmament of desire, whole galaxies coming into view. And I'm as sure as can be friends that it's going to continue that way on through eternity. On and on and on, we're going to want more and more and more.

Somebody says, “That's too bad. People get so discontented and restless; they riot.”

Yes. Do you know why? They don't know what they want. That's the problem. They don't know what they want.

“Every want *He* has implanted, He provides to satisfy...”  
*Ibid.*

Well, back to Jericho and our blind friend sitting by the roadside. He's heard of Jesus. And for a long time, he's been wishing that he could meet Him and get some help. And as desire can do, his desire increased as time went on.

In fact, that's one reason the Lord sometimes delays answering our prayers is so that the *real* sense of want can build up and increase, that we can become more conscious of our need; the desire can be greater, and thus the joy can be larger when we get the answer.

And so, this man, all the longing of his soul was focused in that great desire that he could be healed of that blindness.

And so, as he heard the crowd passing by, he said to those by him, "What is this?"

"Why, Jesus is passing by."

And at once, he began to cry out, "Oh Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

And he kept repeating it.

Finally, the people by him said, "You'd better keep still."

That only made him all the more anxious to cry out. He didn't stop. There was One that heard that call, that ear that is ever sensitive to the cry of the human heart. And Jesus stopped, and the great procession stopped. And that poor blind beggar was told:

"...Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee" Mark 10:49.

"You've been calling for Him. Now, He's calling for you."

And so, he threw away his outer garment and rushed to where he heard the sound of Jesus' voice.

And now came the question, and it's the question I want that each of you shall hear tonight:

"...What wilt thou that I should do unto thee..." Mark 10:51.

As we would put it in our modern speech, "What is it you want Me to do for you? What would you like? You've been calling. You've been crying."

Tell me, friends, did Jesus know exactly what the blind man wanted? Why did He ask him that? Ah, He wanted to give him the opportunity to put into words the longing that had been growing in his heart and was now just welling up like a spring.

And instantly the answer came:

"...Lord, that I might receive my sight" Mark 10:51.

Did he get what he wanted? Exactly. That's what Jesus wants to do for everyone here tonight, friend, to give you all that you long for and to give you *tonight* what you long for.

I've been impressed to study this with you tonight, for I have the feeling that there's more than one heart that's looking forward to sometime in the future when you hope some wonderful thing is to be done for you. Well, I hope so too, friend. But oh, the good news that I bring you tonight is that in this very hour your deepest longing can be satisfied. Your greatest desire up to this point can be met.

What is it that you want? What is it that you really want? What would you like? If you could have *anything* in the universe, what would you like? The blind man knew what he wanted, and he got it.

But now, I want you to turn over to Luke the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter and the 13<sup>th</sup> verse, and here's the story of a man that also was in a crowd of people, and he got close to Jesus like the blind man did. But I want you to notice what it was that he asked for.

If you'll notice in the first verse of this chapter, it says:

“...There were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another...” Luke 12:1.

There must have been thousands of people gathered there. And finally, there was one man of that company that got close enough to Jesus to ask Him a favor.

Now, you think of it. Thousands of people, and here comes a man, and somehow in the way the crowd is milling around, he gets up there close to Jesus, and he can ask him for one thing. What does *he* ask for?

“And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me”  
Luke 12:13.

A family quarrel. This man thinks he's been defrauded.

And as he sees the power that the words of Jesus have with that great audience, he thinks, “If I could just get Jesus to talk to my brother, I know my brother would come through. He'd give me what's coming to me.”

And so, there as he has the one opportunity of his life to express his great desire to the Master, what is it?

“...Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me” Luke 12:13.

Did he get what he asked for? No.

Jesus answered him:

“...Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?”  
Luke 12:14.

And then, at once speaking to the man and to that great audience, He said unto them:

“...Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” Luke 12:15.

Why didn't Jesus give that man what he wanted? Well, there are several reasons. In the first place, friends, wouldn't have satisfied him. He didn't know what he wanted. He just *thought* he knew what he wanted.

Some of you have heard me tell about a wealthy woman who had a maid taking care of her little boy, just a little fellow. This rich woman heard her son crying in the next room.

She said to the maid, "Give him what he wants."

Presently, the crying ceased, and then it burst out louder than ever.

She said, "I told you, give him what he wants."

The maid said, "I did. It was a wasp."

And I sometimes say there are two kinds of unhappy people in this world. Those that are crying for the wasp because they haven't been able to get hold of it, and those that are crying because got it. That takes in nearly all the human family, my friend.

And this man that we're reading about now was in the first class.

"Still as of old, the gold bug sings  
The song he's ever sung;  
Men reach to grasp his gilded wings,  
Stung, stung."  
[Unknown author.]

And Jesus was trying to help this poor man to see that what he really wanted wasn't what he thought he wanted. He was trying to divert his mind from the selfish, covetous, grasping spirit to something far more wonderful, something higher, something deeper, something richer.

And so, He gave this parable of the foolish rich man. You remember the story there in Luke 12.

My point is this, dear friends, Jesus is saying to everyone as He did to that blind man, and as He gave opportunity in this company, and He's saying to you and me tonight, "What is it that you'd like Me to do for you? What do you want? What do you really want? What do you want more than anything else?"

And if it's something that He sees you *really* want, if it's something He sees will really satisfy you, He's ready and anxious to give it to you. It makes Him so glad to do it.

Look in Luke the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter beginning with the 9<sup>th</sup> verse:

“And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth...” Luke 11:8–9.

Everyone? That’s what He says.

“...Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” Luke 11:9–13.

You remember as it was given in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7, the Savior says:

“...How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things [good gifts] to them that ask Him?”  
Matthew 7:11.

Of course, the greatest gift in all the universe, the gift that brings all others in its train, is this gift of the Holy Spirit.

I wonder if Jesus were to pass up and down the aisles tonight and stand before each one and say, “What would you like,” what would you ask for?

I wonder if anyone would ask, “Oh Lord, give me the Holy Spirit.”

I wonder if someone would say, “Master, my heart has been burdened so long with guilt. I’ve been troubled over all the failures I’ve made. Oh Master, if you could just tonight give me the assurance that my sins are forgiven.”

Does the Savior delight to hear a request like that? And when does He want to grant it? Right now, right now.

“Not with hatred’s undertoe  
Doth the love eternal flow;  
Still Thy heart, Oh, Christ arisen,  
Yearns to reach the souls in prison.

Through all depths of sin and loss,  
Drops the plummet of Thy cross;  
Never yet abyss was found  
Deeper than that cross could sound.”  
[Unknown author.]

It does not matter how bad your sins have been. They can be forgiven tonight. It matters not how many times you've failed. They can all be forgiven tonight. And you can stand before God accepted just as if you had not sinned.

If you've received that precious gift of pardon and acceptance, you know that you have found the pearl of great price, and nothing you could ask for could compare in value with that. Am I correct? If you have not received that gift in its fullness, why not ask Jesus for it tonight?

As by the Jericho road Jesus of Nazareth passeth by, He's here tonight. He's within calling distance. Why not, like that blind man, say:

"...Jesus, Thou son of David, have mercy on me"  
Mark 10:47.

And then, as He says:

"...What wilt thou that I should do unto thee..." Luke 10:51.

"What is it that you want Me to do for you?"

Oh, let the longing of your heart be poured out to the One who understands and can do something, as you say:

"...Lord, that I might receive my sight" Luke 10:51.

"That my spiritual vision might be increased, that the darkness of sin might be taken away, that selfishness might be cleansed from my life, that everything that would keep me from You shall be taken away."

And oh, how He loves to answer that prayer.

In the commentary, the Spirit of Prophecy comments in *Book 5*, page 1111, I read:

"All who feel their need of Christ as did blind Bartimaeus, and who will be as earnest and determined as he was, will, like him, receive the blessing which they crave" *SDA Bible Commentary*, Volume 5, page 1111.

Now friends, there's a check that we can present for payment. Let me read it again:

"All..." *Ibid.*

How many is that? Does that take *you* in? I can get in on that, too.

"All..." *Ibid.*

But there's a condition:

“...who feel their need of Christ as did blind Bartimaeus, and who will be as earnest and determined as he was, will, like him, receive the blessing which they crave” *Ibid.*

Ah friends, it means so much to feel our need. You see, that poor fellow that Luke tells about, the thing he felt the need of was the portion of the estate that he thought he'd been cheated out of. That's what he was hungry and thirsty for, that money, that property, so that's what he talked about.

Is money bothering you tonight, the lack of it? Ah, there's something that you need far more. There's something infinitely more valuable—the riches of the grace and love of Jesus in your heart, to know that your sins are forgiven, to know that Christ has hold of your hand, to know that He's guiding in your affairs, to know that all things are under His supervision. This is worth everything.

In the book *Evangelism*, pages 552–553, I read:

“Many have a deep sense of need—a need that earthly riches or pleasures cannot supply; but they know not how to receive that for which they are longing” *Evangelism*, pages 552–553.

I believe there's somebody here tonight just in that position. You have a longing for peace, for assurance, for forgiveness, and to know that you're accepted.

“...But they know not how to receive that for which they are longing” *Ibid.*

It's for you I'm speaking. Listen:

“Christ is waiting and longing to speak pardon, and impart the freely offered grace. He is watching and waiting, saying as He said to the blind man at the gate of Jerico, ‘What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?’ I will take away thy sins; I will wash you in My blood” *Ibid.*

“Full and everlasting salvation is within the reach of every soul” *Ibid.*

Let's reach for it. What do you say, friend? Tell me, is there somebody here tonight that knows that this message is for you this evening hour? Is there somebody here tonight that has a longing in your heart that you want to be satisfied tonight? You want a blessing tonight, and forgetting all about this audience, you want to say to Jesus, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me...”

If there's somebody like that, I wish you'd just stand with bowed head. I want to pray for you, and I want all who know the Lord to pray with me for you, somebody



here tonight that has a deep longing, and you know that Christ has brought you to this meeting to hear this message and to get that want satisfied.

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