

March 30, 2025

CFBC... "Divine Appointments: The Urgency of the Gospel"

"BARTIMAEUS"

Luke 18:35-43

He was blind. This day was like any other day. He got up early in the morning, put on his worn-out clothes, and tried to find a piece of bread or something to eat. Following a well-known path, he sought a prime spot along the heavily travelled road that led through the beautiful city of Jericho. With all the people making their pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover, this could be a profitable day for the blind beggar. He had no idea who would be passing through that day or how profitable it would turn out to be for him!

Luke 18:35–37... As Jesus was approaching Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road begging. 36 Now hearing a crowd going by, he *began* to inquire what this was. 37 They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.

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Luke includes the stories of two men who lived there. One was a tax collector by the name of Zaccheus and the other one was a blind beggar. Today we're going to focus on him. Next week we're going to turn our attention to Zaccheus.

The blind beggar's name was Bartimaeus (*the son of Timaeus*). Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem for the last time. Because of the Passover celebration the crowd that followed Jesus that day was large. Many of them may have heard His impressive teaching. They may have seen Him do some astonishing miracles like casting out demons, feeding thousands with a few fish and few loaves of bread, raising the dead, and healing people who were lame. It seemed that He had authority over both the physical world and the spiritual world. They were wondering...

"Is this the long-awaited Jewish Messiah who will set up His kingdom, rule from Jerusalem, and make Israel great again?"

There were two Jericho's, the old ruined city and the new one built by Herod the Great as a winter palace.

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The religious leaders assumed that the blind were under the judgment of God. Can you imagine how hard it must have been for this man to eke out a living while being saddled with such a devastating handicap? Day after day he would grope his way to the main street that led through the city in order to beg for alms. He had no idea that this day would be different from any other day.

Once he was situated. Bartimaeus heard the shuffling feet and the muffled voices of a huge crowd, so he asked some of the bystanders what was going on. They replied that **"Jesus of Nazareth was passing by."**

I believe the Holy Spirit presents a vivid picture of spiritual blindness and the devastating effect sin has on our lives with this story. Some of you have been crushed by spiritual blindness and the resulting sin that has plagued your life. Satan will do everything in his power to blind you to your own need for the forgiveness of sins that only Jesus can give. He will spare no effort in making sure that you do not recognize Jesus for who He really is. He could care

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less if you think Jesus was a great prophet, a social reformer, a mystical teacher, or even a non-judgmental leader who loved everybody.

2 Corinthians 4:3–4... And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, **4** in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Let's get back to the story...

Luke 18:38–39... And he called out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" **39** Those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

News of the ministry and the miracles of Jesus filled every corner and crevice of Israel. By this point, Bartimaeus had probably heard about the Lord's teaching in the synagogue of Nazareth.

Luke 4:16–21... And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. **17** And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, **18** "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, **19** TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." **20** And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21** And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Can you imagine what this message must have meant to someone like Bartimaeus? With the help of the Holy Spirit, he began to put two and two together until he understood that Jesus was more than a normal man. Unlike the crowd who referred to Him as "**Jesus of Nazareth,**" Bartimaeus knew in his heart that He was "**Jesus, Son of David.**" This Messianic title meant that Jesus was the only Jew

who had the right to fulfill the Davidic Covenant and to be Israel's King (Luke 1:30-33).

I'm amazed that nobody in the crowd wanted to help him get to Jesus. On the contrary, they told him to be quiet, but that didn't intimidate him or stop him. He just screamed even louder—**"Son of David, have mercy on me!"** Can't you hear the desperation in his voice? Listen, you need to know who Jesus is...

- **He is God's Son.**
- **He is the Jewish Messiah.**
- **He is the King of an eternal kingdom.**
- **He is the one and only Savior.**
- **He is fully God and fully man.**
- **He is coming again to rule and to reign.**
- **He is the One to whom every knee will bow.**

Are you spiritually blind? Satan will do everything he can to confuse you and lead you astray. He will even use people to ridicule you in an effort to throw cold water on your growing desire to know Jesus. Are you so desperate for Jesus that you won't let anyone

intimidate you and you won't let the enemy of your soul deceive you?

Luke 18:40–42 ... And Jesus stopped and commanded that he be brought to Him; and when he came near, He questioned him, 41 "What do you want Me to do for you?" And he said, "Lord, I want to regain my sight!" 42 And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well."

"And Jesus stopped." Think about it now. The Lord Jesus, in an act of compassion, stopped dead in his tracks because a desperate, rejected blind man was crying out to Him. The Lord Jesus commanded that Bartimaeus be brought to Him. This was a shocking turn of events. No one would have expected it! I love the way Mark describes the blind man's response...

Mark 10:50... Throwing aside his cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus.

This was the chance of a lifetime and Bartimaeus was going to seize his opportunity. Notice, there was no indecision and no procrastination. Nothing

nor no one would keep him from coming to Jesus. This is what I call an enthusiastic faith!

"What do you want Me to do for you?" Jesus asked. The blind man needed to confess his need and demonstrate his faith. He replied, **"Lord, I want to regain my sight."** He didn't ask for money or anything else. He asked to see again.

Jesus said to him, **"Receive your sight."** The power of the Lord Jesus was on full display here. Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy when He restored sight to this man (Isaiah 35:5-6, Luke 4:18).

"Your faith has made you well," Jesus proclaimed. The word Jesus used here referred to being "saved." Jesus was literally saying, *"Your faith has saved you."* Jesus was drawing attention to the man's faith!

Faith is not just believing facts about Jesus; it is trusting Him to do what only He can do. Without faith we can't have our sins forgiven and we can't live in spiritual victory.

Ephesians 2:8–9... For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; **9** not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Listen, you matter to Jesus just as much as Bartimaeus did. He loves you and He has the supernatural power to change your life forever. He's calling you today. Will you receive Him as your Savior and Lord by faith? Whatever you do, don't ignore His calling.

Isaiah 66:4... So I will choose their punishments And will bring on them what they dread. Because I called, but no one answered; I spoke, but they did not listen. And they did evil in My sight And chose that in which I did not delight."

Jesus is here. He's calling you to come to Him. Are you listening? Will you call out to Him for the forgiveness of sins that you desperately need **(Romans 10:13)**?

I want you to see the supernatural change that Jesus produced in the life of Bartimaeus...

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Luke 18:43... Immediately he regained his sight and began following Him, glorifying God; and when all the people saw it, they gave praise to God.

This man, shunned and scorned by the Jewish religious leaders, became a disciple of the Lord Jesus. The idea of "***following***" spoke of the drastic change that Jesus produced in his life. Having regained his sight, how foolish it would have been for him to return to the daily grind of begging for alms. **New sight required a new way of life!**

Don't buy into the myth that insists you can be saved from your sins without experiencing a fundamental change in the way you live once you place your faith in Jesus!

Galatians 2:20... "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

The idea of "***glorifying***" God spoke of his heart's desire to honor the Lord who had saved him. He was

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determined to make every moment count for His Savior and Lord!

John MacArthur stated...

The tragedy in so many Christian's lives is not the tragedy of living horribly immoral lives. It is the tragedy of living disastrously inconsequential ones.

Here's the truth you must grasp...

TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION!

I wonder if Jesus may not be speaking to many here today— "**What would you have me to do for you?**"
How will you answer His question?

- ***I want you to save me from my sins.***
- ***I want you to set me free from this addiction.***
- ***I want you to restore my love for my spouse.***
- ***I want you to give me victory over bitterness.***

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- ***I want you to help me forgive someone.***
- ***I want you to restore the joy of my salvation.***

This is your opportune moment...

1. COME TO JESUS

2. RECEIVE HIM BY FAITH

3. FOLLOW HIM

TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION!