**LAST CHANCE MIRACLE**

 **MARK 10:46-52;** LUKE 18:35-43

 Here we find the last healing miracle in Mark’s Gospel.

 Remember that Jesus was now on His last journey to Jerusalem some 17 miles away.

 That night He would sleep at Bethany and Calvary was but a week away.

 It was the spring of the year, and nature was announcing its arrival. The trees were budding. The feathery palm tree lifted its majestic head and waved in the morning breeze.

 The crowd that day was on the way to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. There was excitement in the air. The birds were *singing* and *chirping* as they do in the spring. All the gardens around the city were *blooming* in bright beauty.

 But none of those sights stirred the heart of Bartimaeus.

 As far as he was concerned, they might as well have been *dark* and *dismal*, *blank* and *black*, like a moonless, starless night, with its darkness thick as in the land of Egypt, even “darkness that might be felt.”

 There he sat every day hopeless in his condition; yet hopeful for a few coins to *clink* in his cup.

 There he sat outside of Jericho, that city which Joshua said whoever rebuilt it would be cursed and that “*he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.*”—(Josh. 6:26).

1.  This is the only miracle said to have ever occurred there.

2.  No prophet came from Jericho.

3.  No revival took place in Jericho.

 No doubt he felt like a cursed man living in a cursed situation.

 He has not come there that day to meet Christ.

 His thoughts that day were not at all on getting a miracle.

**I. THE MAN WAS IN A MISERABLE CONDITION**

**A. HE HAD A FAMILY CONDITION**

 Bartimaeus a prefix of “Bar” means “Son of” “Son of Timaeus?”

 Timaeus is an Aramaic word and has a meaning of “*foul, defiled, polluted, or unclean.*” Some commentaries believe it also means blind.

 If that is the case then it is very possible that Bartimaeus was the blind son of a blind father.

 Our history hasn’t been much better.

 Romans 5:12, “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*”

 All of our forefathers have been failures in living a perfect life; all of them have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

 That didn’t leave us with much hope.

**B. HE HAD A PHYSICAL CONDITION**

 He was blind.

 Yet the unconverted sits in the same sad condition.

 **1. They Cannot See Spiritual Things**

 II Corinthians 4:4 states, “*In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*”

 Just like the blind man physically; Satan keeps lost people spiritually.

 He likes to keep lost sinners in the dark.

 It is his sole desire that they will follow him to the end when they shall be cast into the outer darkness.

 God would love to show them great and glorious things in His Word, “*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*”—(I Cor. 2:14).

 The sinner misses out on the beauty and blessings of God.

 **2. They Cannot See Their True Selves** You can ask a person how their relationship with God is and they will tell you they are alright.

 They do good works and perform religious deeds.

 But the fact of the matter is that they are blind to their true condition.

 Psalm 14:2-3 proclaims, “*The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.* 3 *They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*”

 What is sad is that they have brought this upon themselves by the hardness of their heart.

 Look at the mole, who has taken to spending their time below the earth.

 Nature has taken revenge upon them, in a natural way, by closing their eyes.

 By neglecting their eyes these animals have made it clear they do not want them.

 There are some fish who have forfeited their eyes for the opportunity to live in a dark cave where eyes will never be required.

 And yet we are no better for Jesus said “*men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*”—(Jn. 3:19).

 Jesus one time asked His disciples, “*Having eyes, see ye not?*”—(Mk. 8:18).

 Oh, the poor sinner every day that he continues to sin, he is deadening the *optic nerve* of the soul.

 **3. A Blind Person Cannot See Society.**

 Bartimaeus could not see the condition of another soul around him.

 A lost father cannot see that he is leading his family to hell.

 A lost mother cannot see that she is leading her daughter down a path that leads to destruction.

 **4. A Blind Person Cannot See His Scheduled Future.**

 There he is, face-to-face with the great realities—God, heaven, and eternity but he does not see them.

 There he stands on the brink of a great precipice thinking he is secure, but he does not see the danger below.

 It does not cross his mind that, “*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*”—(Heb. 9:27).

 He makes a joke out of hell, the church, and Christians.

 Unfortunately, to many hell is not a reality.

**B. HE HAD A FINANCIAL CONDITION**

 “Begging” was his business.

 Since he could not work for himself; he was poor.

 He was always depending upon the *goodwill* and *mercies* of others.

 Because the sinner has no peace or pleasure within himself; don’t you see how they are always looking to another: *entertainment*, *sports*, *nicotine*, *drugs*, *alcohol*.

 **1. Lost People Are Spiritual Paupers.**

 They have nothing to offer God, as far as goodness and good works go.

 All this beggar had was his clothes.

 Isaiah 64:6 says, “*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*”

 Those rags can refer to a dirty, contaminated cloth that has been wrapped on a cancerous or contagious sore on a person’s body.

 It does not matter how expensive the clothes you wrap your body up with; all you are covering is a diseased body and soul.

 All the sinner has to offer God is filthy rags, a wasted life, and broken promises (I’m going to do better).

  Without Christ, the life of the lost is worthless as an *empty pocket* turned inside out.

 Though you may be wealthy with this world’s goods, without Christ you are nothing.

 Because without Christ you have nothing that is going to last.

 Nothing to call your own, for, “*the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*”—(II Pet. 3:10).

 They have no place in this world, and no prospects for the next.

 They have no part or lot with the people of God.

 There they sit outside the gate of security.

 Blind to the promises of God.

 Blind to their Condition*…Dead in their trespasses and sins*

Blind to the Consequences*…For the wages of sin is death*

Blind to the Cure*…But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*

 Devoid of the presence and Spirit of God.

 Thirsty without a drink of Living Water.

 Hungry without a bite of that Heavenly Manna.

 All by himself the sinner is…

 Without the only blood that can cleanse from sin.

 Without Christ, without God, without hope for any change.

 Bartimaeus did not need the REFORMATION of remedial glasses.

 Bartimaeus did not need the eye slave of RELIGION to cure his blindness.

 Bartimaeus needed the SAVIOUR who could give him sight!

**II. THE MESSAGE THAT WAS CONSEQUENTIAL**

 Luke 18:36-37, “*And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.* 37 *And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.*”

 It was a very *brief* sermon that was preached to him that day.

 He heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.

 It didn’t matter if he *understood* doctrine or could have *explained* theology.

 He had never heard such a clear and concise statement of grace before.

 What a great contrast with some of us.

 We have been sermonized until we have become sermon-weary!

 It was only a brief sermon, but he believed it strongly!

 At that moment he forgot his *need* for a handout.

 He forgot the *sorrow*, *pain*, and *loneliness* of his life.

 This was the same Jesus who healed the nobleman’s son.

 The same Jesus who healed the woman with the issue of blood.

 The same Jesus who healed the man with the palsy.

 The same Jesus who provided food for the hungry and weary multitude with only a few loaves and small fishes.

 He believed that Jesus could bring an end to his long, dark, depressing night.

 Jesus could make it possible to him to earn his own food and shelter.

 He feels like this is his opportunity.

 His ship has *come in* and he must jump *on* before the tide goes out.

 If you would only incline your ears you can hear the approach of One that is able and willing to restore your sight!

**III. A MIGHTY CRY**

 Mark 10:47, “…*he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.*”

**A. HE CRIED WITH DISCERNMENT**

 As one writer said, “*He had no eyesight, but he had insight.*”

 The crowd knew the Lord only as “*Jesus of Nazareth*”, which referred to the place where the Lord had grown up.

 When Bartimaeus cried “*Thou Son of David*” he was openly and publically declaring that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

 Jesus was the anointed one of God.

 The term “Son of David” is a messianic term, the royal title of the Son of God.

 Blind as he was, and unable to read books for a source of knowledge; he made himself acquainted with the genealogy of the Messiah.

 He acknowledged that Jesus had the power and authority to heal him.

 This blind man saw what most sighted people had not seen.

 It is quite certain that Bartimaeus did not come to believe in Christ from what he saw for he was stone-blind.

 No ray of light had ever burst into his soul; he was shut up in thick darkness and could see nothing.

 Thank God that seeing does not produce faith!

 “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”—(Rom. 10:17).

 “*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*”—(Jn. 20:29).

**B. HE CRIED WITH DESPERATION**

 In both *verse 47 and 48*, Mark chooses an *interesting word* to describe the way the Bartimaeus got the Lord’s attention.

 The Bible says that “*he began to cry out*”*.*

 Which speaks of a *loud scream, or a cry of anguish*.

 The same word is used later in Mark 15:13, where it says that the crowd, “…cried, ‘*Crucify Him!*’”

 As Bartimaeus found out that the Lord Jesus was passing by, he didn’t offer a half-hearted,“*Dear Lord, bless us, we pray.*”

 No, he was crying out *as if his whole life depended on it*, Bartimaeus screamed, “*Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.*”

 When is the last time you prayed with desperation?

 Have you ever cried out to the Lord Jesus as if your whole life depended upon Him hearing you?

**C. HE CRIED DESPITE THE DISCOURAGEMENT**

 Mark 10:48, “*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.*”

 He was not going to let a bunch of negative, critical, heckling bystanders rob him of his dream of sight.

**D. HE CRIED WITHOUT DEMANDING**

Most beggars cried for money—He cried for MERCY.

 If he would have approached Jesus in a loud and arrogant way; Jesus would have just passed on by.

 He didn’t cry how life was unfair to him.

 He didn’t give reasons why Jesus should heal him.

 He begged for mercy!

 Lamentations 3:22, “*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*”

 Ephesians 2:4-5, “*But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,* 5 *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*”

 Years ago Dr. Bernardo told how a little lad stood at his door and said: “*Are you the man what takes the boys and girls what haven’t any home?*” Dr. Bernardo replied: “*Why, yes, my son. We have an orphanage where we house some thousands of homeless children. What do you want?*” The little lad replied: “*Please, sir, I haven’t got any papa or mamma. Won’t you please take me?*” The president of the orphanage answered: “*But, my lad, I must know something about you; I must have something to recommend you.*” At this the little fellow held up the threads of his ragged coat, and with tears running down his dirty cheeks, he said: “*If you please, sir, I thought these here would be all I’d need to rekermend me.*”

 Psalm 34:18, “*The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*”

**IV. A CHRIST WHO WAS MERCIFUL**

 Mark 10:49, “*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.*”

 As He leaves Jericho *headed to the cross*, He still has time to *hear the cry* of a beggar named Bartimaeus.

**A. THE CESSATION OF JESUS**

 The Prince paused at the pauper!

 What a thought, “*Jesus stood still*”.

 Usually when we think about Him we think about how He “*went about doing good*”.

 It wasn’t this man’s *melodious* voice that caused Jesus to want to pause.

 It wasn’t his singing ability or musical instrument ability.

 It was a simple cry from a blind beggar!

 Heaven and Earth and Hell were all going to be affected by this journey.

 The glory of God was connected to it.

 The *redemption* of man depended upon it.

 But there was never a journey so important in the life of Jesus that He could not pause long enough to relieve the suffering.

 Even with a world in turmoil and torment; He has time for you!

 Spurgeon said, “I have heard of Joshua who said, ‘*Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.*’; but I rank the blind beggar above Joshua, for he caused the Sun of Righteousness to stand still.” (Josh. 10:12).

 You can be of good cheer this morning!

**B. THE COMMAND OF JESUS**

 Jesus didn’t reject the man like the crowd, but He had compassion and received him.

**V. THE CASTING AWAY OF THE MATERIAL**

 Mark 10:50, “*And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.*”

**A. THE REMOVAL**

 He threw aside his outward covering which would have been a coat to protect him from the elements of the weather, and a blanket to lie beneath.

 He forsook dependence upon anything else and trusting solely in Jesus.

 There are some things we have to *abandon* if we want Jesus to help us!

 There are some entanglements and weights and hindrances that we have to remove.

 Those garments spotted by the flesh have to go!

 You and I need to cast away the flimsy garments that we think will protect us—our righteousness, riches.

 There is no shelter in them from the storm of Divine wrath, and no refuge in the day of danger.

 The rich young ruler longed for Jesus and panted for eternal life, and Jesus respected him, but he could not bring himself to part with the things of this life.

 You know what Cortez did when he went to Mexico, and intended to conquer it. The soldiers that were with him were few and dispirited. The Mexicans were many, and the enterprise hazardous. The soldiers would have gone back to Spain, but Cortez took two or three chosen heroes with him, and went down to the seaside and broke up all the ships; and, “*Now,*” he said, “*we must conquer or die. We cannot go back.*”

 Burn your boats; get rid of all thoughts of return; leave sin, and abhor it.

 He did not care what he left or lost so long as he found his sight.

 He wanted nothing hindering him from getting to Jesus.

 Isaiah 61:10, “*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,*”

**B. THE RISING**

You will not get anything from God by do-nothing sitting.

 You must rise and come to the Lord.

 There is salvation for the sinner, but nothing for the sluggard!

**C. THE RAPIDNESS**

 He did not hesitate.

**VI. THE CROSS-EXAMINATION OF THE MAN**

 Mark 10:51, “*And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?*”

 When Queen Esther stood before the King Ahasuerus he asked her, “*What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.*”—(Esther 5:6).

 But Christ put no limit on His offer!

 He was putting the key of the treasure-house into the beggar’s *hand*!

 Think of a man doing as Jesus did; standing before another and saying, “*I will give you anything you want.*”

 He must be either a mad man, or a blasphemer, or God manifest in the flesh!

 John 15:7, “*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*”

 If you take a little pitcher to the well; you are going to walk away carrying little water.

 The ocean can be vast and deep, but of the stream is only narrow and shallow it is not going to carry much water.

 Colossians 2:3, “*In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*”

 “*What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?*”

 It is a rule with Christ never to do for us what we, can do for ourselves.

 He did not tell the man that he was blind, because the man knew that himself.

 He did not undertake to do the work of conscience.

 As long as you are content with it; He won’t touch it.

 As long as you are trying to figure and work it out; He won’t.

 As long as you are relying on something else; He won’t intervene.

 You have got to get to the place where, “*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*”—(I Pet. 5:7).

**VII. THE MAN’S CONFESSION**

 Mark 10:51, “…*The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.*”

 When Bartimaeus called Jesus “Lord,” he used the title Rabboni, meaning “my Master.” The only other person in the Gospels who used it was Mary (John 20:16). The beggar had twice called Him “Son of David,” a national messianic title, but “Rabboni” was an expression of personal faith.

 He was not ashamed of his condition.

 “*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper:*”—(Prov. 28:13).

 He was specific.

**VIII. THE MIRACLE BY CHRIST**

 Mark 10:52, “*And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.*”

 “Blind at the beginning of Christ’s sentence, he was seeing at the end of it! No surgery! No bandages! No adjustment! Boom—sight! He saw human beings for the first time. He saw the gawking crowd. He saw “The City of Roses” hung with palm trees, and the hills of Moab off in the distance. But the thing he saw first was the face of Jesus.”—(R. Kent Hughes. Preaching the Word. Bible Explorer 4.0. Copyright 2006. WORDsearch Corp, Inc. All Rights Reserved).

**IX. THE MAN CHASED AFTER CHRIST**

 Mark 10:52, “…*And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.*”

**A. HE REALIZED**

 He saw what Jesus had done and realized the debt of gratitude he owned the Lord.

 His changed life led to changed actions.

 II Corinthians 5:17, “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*”

 He was a new person, following a new path, with a new purpose.

 What are you going to do for God when He answers your prayer?

**B. HE REJOICED**

 Luke 18:43, “*glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.*”

**C. HE REFLECTED**

 The Bible tells us—“*and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.*”

 The man glorified God and caused others to praise God also.

 He was simply letting his light shine and reflecting Christ through his life.

 Who are you going to tell about what the Lord has done for you?

**CON:**

 Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.

 He was never to be in Jericho any more.

 If you let Him pass, you may never hear Him call you again, and you may abide in the darkness forever.

“Just as I am — without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd’st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

“Just as I am — poor, wretched, blind —
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!”

 He was looking for money, but found a *miracle*.

 He was looking for a few coins, but found himself face-to-face with *Christ*.

 Maybe you are saved; but you just feel like you’re in the dark.

“Again He comes; from place to place

His holy footprints we can trace.

He passeth at out threshold—nay,

He enters, condescends to stay.

Shall we not gladly raise the cry,

‘Jesus of Nazareth passeth by?’

Ho, all ye heavy laden come!

Here’s pardon, comfort, rest and home!

Ye wanderers from the Father’s face!

Return, accept His offered grace!

Ye tempted ones, there’s refuge nigh

‘Jesus of Nazareth passeth by!”

 The blind man experienced four things:

1. A change of focus from darkness to light—that’s conversion.

2. A change of direction from sitting to following—that’s discipleship.

3. A change of purpose from begging to praising—that’s worship.

4. A change of scope from being blessed in order to bless others—that’s evangelism.

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