

Faith that gives sight to the blind

A couple of years ago a society for the blind had a campaign to promote the needs of the blind. They started off with a walk through the streets to the public library with non-blind people being blindfolded in order for them to experience what it's like to be blind. Of course, a sighted person without a blindfold led the blindfolded person who put their full trust in the sighted person to lead them to the right place and to keep them from stumbling. The Lord goes beyond being a guide to the blind to giving the blind their sight when they put their faith in Him.

Luke 18:35-43

As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging.³⁶ When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening.³⁷ They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."

³⁸ He called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

³⁹ Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁰ Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him,⁴¹ "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Lord, I want to see," he replied.

⁴² Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you."⁴³ Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

1) Blind beggars

- We might not all be physically blind beggars, but we were all spiritually blind due to our unbelief
 - 2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- Our unbelief not only blinds us to God but also prevents us from entering into His rest
 - Hebrews 3:18-19 And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.
 - If we haven't entered into God's rest then we haven't ceased from our own works to try and attain God's favour and then still don't have the peace and assurance that that rest brings.
 - A blind man who rejects a guide stumbles around in the dark not knowing where he's going whereas he could have rested in the assistance of a guide
- But, why did Jesus say that neither another blind man nor his parents had sinned if we're all sinners by nature?
 - John 9:1-3 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.
 - Jesus wasn't saying that that man nor his parents weren't sinners, but that his blind condition wasn't caused by sin. He was born blind for the glory of God to be seen in his healing.
 - There's a misconception that all sickness is a result of particular sin, which isn't true. However, it also isn't true that sin doesn't lead to sickness, such as the paralysed man whom Jesus forgave his sins and healed him.
 - Luke 5:22-24 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?"²³ Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?²⁴ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."
- Being spiritually blind, a person:
 - Has no true view and understanding of who God is and thus cannot have a relationship with Him.
 - Has no future hope as what he sees is all that there is.
 - Is blind to his own sinful condition and thinks that they're righteous before God when they're not. They're self-righteous
- Without Jesus we're all spiritually blind beggars who need to cry out to Him for spiritual healing and restoration.

2) The beggar, the crowd, and Jesus

- Those present were the beggar, the crowd, and Jesus
- The beggar heard that it was Jesus passing by and he called out in faith, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”
 - He believed that Jesus was the Messiah – Son of David is a messianic title as the Messiah came in the line of David
 - Isaiah 9:7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.
 - The beggar knew that Jesus was merciful and was confident to cry out to Him for mercy in his time of need.
 - Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
 - The Hebrew word for “mercy seat”, mentioned in Exodus 25: 17, is kapporet, which means “to cover”, “wipe out”, or “atone”
 - Thus, when the blind man called out to Jesus, he was crying out for more than his blindness to be removed. He was crying out for the forgiveness of his sins and to be given a second chance in life.
 - How often do we cry out to Jesus to remove our blindness and cleanse us from our sinfulness?
- The hypocritical crowd that rebuked him telling him to be quiet
 - Crowds, even those who follow Jesus, are often hypocritical and fickle
 - Some crowds follow Jesus for what they can get out of Him, such as the crowds who were fed by Him
 - Some crowds follow Him merely out of curiosity
 - Some follow Him because they believe, but then hinder others from coming to Him, such as the crowd and the blind man, or the disciples who rebuked mothers who brought their children to be blessed by Jesus
 - Matthew 19:13-14 Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.
Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”
- Jesus who is forever merciful and gracious to the humble, yet opposes the proud
 - Jesus wasn’t swayed by the crowds, or the immature in faith, and responded to the blind man with grace and mercy
- Do we have the attitudes of the crowds that believe in Jesus, but hinder others from coming near to Him to find mercy in their times of need?
- Or are we Christlike in our attitudes, listening and hearing the cry of the penitent and stopping to come alongside them that they too can receive mercy from Him as we have?

3) Healed of blindness by faith

- Luke 18:40-43 Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?”
“Lord, I want to see,” he replied.
Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.
- Jesus seemed to ask an obvious question – What do you want me to do for you?
 - Surely it was obvious that he would have wanted to see, but Jesus wanted him to express his need.
 - Expressing what we really want reveals our primary desires and in them the condition of our hearts is revealed
- Jesus healed him, but stated that his faith has healed him
- Other times when Jesus said this were:
 - The lady who Jesus healed of internal bleeding
 - One of the ten lepers, who was a Samaritan, whom Jesus healed
- There are other times when Jesus couldn’t do miracles due to the lack of faith of the people
 - Matthew 13:57-58 But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honour except in his own town and in his own home.” And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.
- Do you have faith for Jesus to heal your spiritual blindness to see that He is able to meet all your needs?
- Is your faith for yourself as well as for others, or is your faith a self-centred faith that hinders others from coming close to Jesus?
- Or do you lack faith hindering Jesus from doing anything in your life as well as in the lives of those around you?