

Teaching Script



Week 2 – 1/19/2022 (Scripture Focus on Mark 10:46-52) – Healing of Bartimaeus



INTRODUCTION

Recently I've been volunteering in the children's ministry of my church. I don't know how or why I agreed to do this. I think the children's pastor played some type of mind trick on me. For some reason, working in children's church makes me more nervous than speaking in front of adults in the main service. So I over-prepare. It's my way of controlling my nervousness and making sure that I don't look like a lazy person who's done nothing to get ready. The last time I volunteered, I had lessons, games, crafts, and snacks all lined up and ready to roll ahead of time!

At my church, the kids outnumber the adults. They're literally everywhere. I was prepared to run a tight ship in children's church, keeping us on a specific track, but instead it turned into an hour of me answering questions. I felt like I accomplished nothing, as I heard nothing except questions like:

- *Can I have a snack?*
- *What are we doing next?*
- *Can you help me with my craft?*
- *Can I go to the bathroom?*
- *When is this going to be over?*
- *Do you want to watch me do a trick?*
- *Can I get some stuff from the game closet?*
- *Can I go find my mom?*

Good thing I stressed out and over-prepared for that, right?

Kids are the best at asking questions. They have zero insecurity or self-consciousness. They will tell you *exactly* what they want or need. As adults, we're much more self-conscious. As a result, we can lose the ability to verbalize our desires or ask for help. And some of that is a good thing. A little self-awareness never hurts. On the other hand, Jesus *did* tell people to pay attention to little children and follow their lead. Maybe they have something figured out that we don't.

TENSION

In the same way, Jesus followed the lead of children when He was on Earth—He asked lots of questions. He was a great storyteller and teacher. He could've spoken on any topic and solved any problem before it even came to the surface. And yet, He loved to get people involved and engaged. And one of the ways He did this was by asking questions.

In this series, we're focusing specifically on questions Jesus asked that can stretch our faith. And the question we're going to look at today is one that would make any child happy.

If you're anything like me, when you picture God asking you questions, they usually sound something like this:

- When are you going to get your act together?
- Why do you keep messing up in areas where you know it's wrong?
- How long are you going to keep struggling with that one thing?
- Why don't you pray or read your Bible more?

- Why can't you be more loving and patient with the people in your life?

We have an internal dialogue of things that we believe God asks us. And although not all of the questions are bad ones, we usually approach them from a position of shame. We believe that God is displeased with us because there's something wrong with us. **Whatever God is asking from us, we believe that we'll never be enough to make Him happy or pleased.**

Other times, we don't necessarily want to know the questions that God is asking. We're worried that He'll ask something like, "Will you be willing to sell all of your possessions and move to another country to be a missionary for Me?" Or, "Can you prove your devotion to Me by showing how committed you are with your words and actions?" Or we're afraid He'll ask us to do things that make our life boring and lifeless. **We think that God is most pleased when our lives are most rigid.** We think He's one hundred percent about rules and discipline, and zero percent about our wants and desires.

So as we dig into our discussion today, think about this: **If Jesus were in front of you right now, what question do you think He would ask?**

Today we're going to look at one of the most unexpected questions that Jesus asked. And it's a question that any young child would be thrilled to hear and happy to answer!

TRUTH

In the New Testament, the gospel of Mark records an account with Jesus and His disciples. They were traveling by foot when they came across a blind man. Check it out.

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means "son of Timaeus"), was sitting by the roadside begging (Mark 10:46 NIV).

In that time and culture, some people believed that individuals with physical ailments had done something to deserve their ailment. It was one of the false beliefs that Jesus challenged when He was on Earth. To a lot of people, a disability was not only a physical and financial issue, it was a spiritual issue.

Mark continues.

When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mark 10:47 NIV).

This was the blind man's first act of faith: **He cried out to Jesus for mercy.** Isn't it true that so often when we're in a tough situation, we'll blame Jesus—we'll turn our back on Him? Or we'll turn to other people. Or we'll look for an escape. Not this guy. He cried out without shame and without reserve. When he called Jesus "Son of David," it was his way of recognizing that Jesus was the Messiah who had been prophesied about.

And then,

Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mark 10:48 NIV).

This was the blind man's second act of faith: **He continued to cry out to Jesus.** He didn't stop when people told him to be quiet. Don't we often ask God to help us one time and then we give up? We talk ourselves out of it. We let someone else talk us out of it. We give up hope. We distract ourselves. Again, not this guy. He was bold and relentless.

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus (Mark 10:49-50 NIV).

At this point, Jesus required another step of faith from the blind man. He said, *"Call him"* (Mark 10:49 NIV). In other words, "Go get him. Tell him to come to Me." The man responded with his third act of faith: He set his cloak aside. For a beggar, a cloak was his blanket at night. It was his mattress and pillow. It was his sense of security. **The blind man threw aside his security blanket to go to Jesus.**

We all have things that represent our sense of security.

- worry
- money
- alcohol

- relationships
- control
- cynicism

- work
- parenting
- technology

This list is endless. We have things we go to that help us cope with the harsh reality of life. For some of us, it's not that our lives are particularly bad. It's just that we need something to help us make it through the routine grind of everyday life. In the midst of that, Jesus is inviting us to go straight toward Him.

And then comes the big question that Jesus asked:

"Have you been doing everything that you're supposed to be doing?"

Wait, that wasn't what He asked. He asked this:

"How well do you understand and follow the law?"

No, that wasn't it either. This was the ACTUAL question that Jesus asked:

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him (Mark 10:51 NIV).

Wouldn't all little children love for us to ask them this question?

Jesus took the time to ask the blind man what he wanted. His question is not as obvious as you might think. In a different incident, when Jesus asked another man if he wanted to get well, it appeared that the man's illness gave him an identity that he cherished more than healing. We patronize people when we assume that we know how they want to be helped. Not only did Jesus ask so that the blind man would verbalize his faith, He also let the blind man know that he was seen, heard, loved, and valued.

In our own lives, if we're going to answer this question, we have to figure out what we want. This takes reflection.

In the book *A Praying Life*, Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, says this:

Why do we have to spend our lives striving to be something that we would never want to be, if we only knew what we wanted?'

Most of us don't put God to the test. We don't ask for what we want. Therefore, we don't have the experience of answered prayer. We don't ask, either because we don't think that our desires are spiritual, or because we haven't reflected on what we want. We keep God at a distance because we don't realize how much He cares.

Faith, on the other hand, gets us on our feet and on the way toward Jesus with boldness! We throw our cloak aside and tell Him what we want. Think of it this way . . .

Faith is about approaching and asking.

It's not about sitting back and hoping. It's not about us retreating to our safety nets. It's not about us distracting ourselves. It's about us following the example of Bartimaeus and walking straight toward Jesus.

This is what happened next:

The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you."

Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road (Mark 10:51-52 NIV).

¹ Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*, p. 138.

APPLICATION

So how do we take this miraculous story and apply it to our lives? What are some ways we can put this into practice?

I think our first step is asking ourselves this: **What do I want Jesus to do for me?** I mean, if Jesus were in front of you right now and asked, “*What do you want me to do for you?*” (Mark 10:51 NIV), how would you answer? If you were open, honest, and bold with God, what would you say? In what area do you feel blind, hurt, or lost? Whatever that thing is, I encourage you to approach Jesus with bold faith and ask Him for mercy. Ask Him to help you, heal you, or rescue you.

The writer of Hebrews in the New Testament wrote this:

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him (Hebrews 11:6 NIV).

Sometimes faith is simply being like a child and earnestly telling the Father what you want from Him.

Here’s the next question: **What is the cloak that you need to throw down?** Instead of going to Jesus and crying for mercy, what is it that you typically go to for a sense of security?

There’s another verse in Hebrews that I love. It says this:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us (Hebrews 12:1 NLT).

What would it look like for you to set aside that cloak and run to Jesus like a child? There’s no better day than today to lose the security blanket and put your faith in Him.

LANDING

Imagine if you knew what you wanted from Jesus. And imagine if you had the confidence to ask Him for it. You may not get exactly what you want as soon as you want it, but your faith will be stretched as you continually set aside your security blankets and walk toward Him. **Faith is about approaching and asking.** And today is a great day to begin doing just that.

Small Group Discussion



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some not-so-self-aware questions you’ve been asked by a child?
2. Why are children so good at asking for what they want?
3. Why do you think we’re hesitant to ask God for what we want?
4. Read Mark 10:46-52. How do you think Bartimaeus felt when he heard Jesus was coming?
5. How do you think God feels when we ask Him for something?
6. God doesn’t always give us what we ask for. But what are some guarantees He gives us about asking for Him for things?
7. Think about some things you want to ask God for. Spend some time talking with Him about those things.