





Have Mercy

Matthew 20:29-34

Mark 10:46-52

Luke 18:35-43

Life of Jesus: Miracles

It is not completely clear if these accounts are all the same story, but there are many similarities, so they are often taught together. There are some differences, as Matthew's account mentions two men and Mark and Luke mention one. Matthew says that Jesus is leaving Jericho, and Mark and Luke say that he is coming to Jericho. There were two parts of the ancient city of Jericho; Jesus may have been leaving one area and coming to another. All the men in the stories ask Jesus for mercy; this lesson will address the passages in all three gospels.

Jesus has been telling his disciples about what is going to happen to him, and the things that are going to take place. He told them that in order to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, you must be a servant. Jesus did not come to be ministered to, but to give his life.

Jesus is with his disciples, and huge crowds of people follow him everywhere he goes. There is a blind man, or men, sitting on the side of the road begging.

Discuss:

Why would they be sitting by the side of the road?

Would this be a busy area of town where many people would be walking by?

Most likely, and beggars would be hoping for people to give them money.

When a person is blind or missing one of the senses, often the other senses become heightened, or stronger. If someone is not able to see, they might have more acute hearing because their ears have been trained to hear the things they cannot see.

The gospel of Mark is specific, it tells us the man's name: Bartimaeus. He heard the crowds passing by, and asked the people around him what was going on.

Discuss:

If you couldn't see, how would you know what was happening?

How would you know there were crowds passing by? What would it sound like?

What are some of the things you might hear?

Bartimaeus asked what was going on, and the people told him that Jesus of Nazareth was walking by.

It is very likely this man had heard about Jesus. Jesus was famous. What does that mean at this time? He was a celebrity. What does it mean to be a celebrity? They did not have television or the internet like we do today, but Jesus was popular for the things he had done. People talked about Jesus; he was very well known. Sometimes rumors circulate about celebrities or famous people and some of the information is true, and some is not.

Because of Bartimaeus' response, we can assume he had heard about Jesus and knew who he was. The Bible tells us that there are so many things that Jesus did that it would not be possible to write them all down (John 21:25).



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Discuss:

What do you think he had heard about Jesus?

He may have heard about his miracles.

He may have heard about the other people he healed; he may have heard that he healed blind people.

It is likely that Bartimaeus was well known himself. Luke tells us he was a “certain” blind man. He asked the people what was going on, and they answered him. He was probably known as the blind beggar on the side of the road.

So, if you are blind and there is a famous person in town, what can you do to meet them? People do not usually respect blind beggars. A beggar is looked down upon by many people. Throughout the Bible Jesus helped those people who were desperate, those who were not able to take care of themselves, those who had no other options. They had to rely on Jesus because he was their only hope.

This man, this beggar, would not have had the influence or reputation to get someone to bring him to Jesus. So he starts yelling - loudly.

“Jesus, son of David, HAVE MERCY ON ME!”

First, notice what he called Jesus.

He called him the “son of David.”

Why? What does this mean? It means that he had already formed an opinion of who he believed that Jesus was. He believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah, coming to save God’s people.

There were many prophecies about the Messiah being of the house of David (1 Kings 2:45; 1 Kings 9:5; 1 Kings 11:36; 2 Kings 8:19; Psalm 18:50; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 16:5; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; 33:17; Ezekiel 37:24-25).

He keeps shouting, “Jesus, son of David, HAVE MERCY ON ME!”

All the people around him tell him to stop. They tell him to “Be quiet!!” But the more the people rebuke him, the more he repeats it, and cries out more and more, and only gets louder.

He continues to call out, “Jesus! Son of David! HAVE MERCY ON ME!!!”

Discuss:

Imagine what this would have been like. Imagine if you were blind, and you heard that there was hope.

For the first time in your life, there is someone nearby who can possibly help you. This person might be able to change your situation, or change your circumstances.

If you were completely dependent on others who can change your life, would you yell? Would you cry out? Would you be quieted by those around you who told you to stop?

Bartimaeus was not quiet. He only yelled louder. This could be his only chance; his only hope - he knew Jesus was the ONLY one who could help him.



Have Mercy

Then, Jesus STOOD STILL.

Wow. He got Jesus' attention. He did not give in to the fear of man. He did not concern himself with what people thought of him. He was persistent. He had faith and it showed. He kept calling out again and again until he got Jesus' attention - even though everyone around him was telling him to stop.

Then Jesus commanded the people to call him. He heard someone calling him, and commanded that the person be brought to him.

Now the attitude of the people is reversed. People who had just been telling the man to "hush!" moments ago have now completely changed. They tell Bartimaeus, "Get up! He's calling you!"

The book of Mark tells us that Bartimaeus threw off his coat.

Think about this: this is a dramatic move. He jumps up, and quickly pulls off his cloak, throws it on the ground, and comes to Jesus.

Why? There are different theories on why he did this. Some theories say that his coat was heavy, and kept him from being able to quickly get to Jesus. The most likely seems to be that beggars wore clothing that identified them. They often had coats or cloaks that would be recognized as the clothing of a beggar, or a handicapped person. Bartimaeus may have been making a statement by throwing off his coat, and it was basically like saying, I am no longer a beggar, I will no longer need this.

This was an act of faith that he would be healed.

When Bartimaeus reached Jesus, Jesus asked him,

"What do you want me to do for you?"

He had called out for mercy, but Jesus wanted him to be specific. What do you want me to do? Bartimaeus responded, "Lord, (Rabbi) I want to receive my sight." The gospel of Matthew says they asked "that our eyes may be opened."

The gospels of Mark and Luke say that Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight, your faith has saved you," or "your faith has made you whole." The gospel of Mark says that Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes. All three gospels say that sight was received "immediately."

The gospel of Matthew speaks of the compassion of Jesus. This is the mercy for which Bartimaeus was asking. The original New Testament word for mercy translates as: to have compassion, to help one who is afflicted, wretched, or seeking aid.

After he received his sight, he followed Jesus. The gospel of Luke tells that he not only followed Him, but he glorified God.

When all the people saw it, they gave praise to God.

Jesus in the Story



Jesus has many names and titles: Son of God, Son of Man, and son of David are only a few.

But what does “son of David” mean?

Matthew 1 and Luke 3 show us the lineage of Christ. The lineage of both Joseph and Mary were able to be traced back to King David (Matthew 1:6; Luke 3:31). God promised that the throne of David would be established forever (1 Kings 2:45; 1 Kings 8:25; 1 Kings 9:5; Isaiah 9:7; Luke 1:32-33). This kingdom established through David was fulfilled by Jesus.

Jesus is the “son of David” and His reign will have no end.

What is mercy?

The original Hebrew word for mercy is “hesed” which means goodness, kindness, and faithfulness.

King David was a “a man after God’s own heart” (Acts 13:22). He lived under the law, but he understood the heart of God. He understood that at the heart of the Mosaic law was a God who communicated with his people from the mercy seat.(Exodus 30:6) David understood that God is full of compassion, gracious, long-suffering, and full of mercy and truth (Psalm 86:15; 145:8) . And that the base meaning of the law was the law of love; to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and to love your neighbor as yourself. This was the kingdom that was meant to be established throughout eternity; this kingdom of a loving God full of goodness and mercy.

Bartimaeus understood who Jesus actually was; he knew that he was the promised Messiah. He must have known the prophecies of the Messiah who would come from the lineage of David. Not only that, Bartimaeus knew that the Messiah would bring in the kingdom of God with mercy and compassion.

He rightfully asked, “Have mercy on me!”

Lesson Questions & Memory Verses

17. One Thing I Know

Read Isaiah 64:8

1. What is a potter?
2. Who is the potter?
3. What are we compared to in this verse?
4. What does it say about God's work?

Isaiah 42:16

And I will bring the blind by the way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them.

18. If You Believe

1. What does Mark 9:23 say is possible to those who believe?
2. John 12:44 says if you believe on Jesus you actually believe on who?
3. Luke 8:12 says if they believe they would be?

John 20:30-31

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you may have life in His name.

19. Giving Thanks

1. When does Ephesians 5:20 say that we should give thanks?
2. Who should we give thanks to?
3. Colossians 3:17 says that we should do everything in the name of Jesus and then give what to God?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

20. Have Mercy

1. Where did God meet with people? (Exodus 25:22; 30:6)
2. When you walk with Jesus, what will follow you? (Psalm 23:6)
3. What surrounds you when you trust in the Lord? (Psalm 32:10)

Psalm 147:11

The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his mercy.

