

## Compassion to Desperate Sinners - Sunday

The scripture for our sermon today is found in Matt. 20:29-34 and in Mark 10. Let's begin in Matthew.

*“29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. 30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, [thou] Son of David. 31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, [thou] Son of David. 32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? 33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. 34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him” (Matt. 20:29-34).*

These two blind men crying to Jesus for mercy preach the Gospel of God's saving grace to those helpless to save themselves. Though helpless, they are moved by the Spirit of God to cry out of their need to Christ alone for mercy. On the surface, Jesus is the Lord to whom we must look to and go to for healing. He is compassionate. And He is able to heal our bodies by His touch. These two men were immediately healed by Him. But the lesson in this account is not about physical healing because the Gospel is not about physical healing. It is about the mighty works of Jesus Christ to save our souls from sin. That is the message of scripture. That is the message of this text. Matthew here tells of two blind men. In this we see that salvation does not depend on the differences in men. It depends on Christ alone. Our natural gifts, or the lack of natural gifts, do not move God to save us. Our work and the strength of our crying do not move God to save us. (I think that is one of the more difficult lessons to learn.) Only the mercy of God in Christ moves God to save. Mark tells of one blind man. In that one man, we see our personal and desperate and urgent need for mercy from Jesus Christ the Lord. I want to focus on this one man. May God enable you and me through this man to see our own great need of mercy and find that mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ as

our sovereign, almighty, compassionate Savior! And may He be glorified in saving our souls! Beginning in Mark 10:46 we read...

*“46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, [thou] Son of David, have mercy on me. 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. 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. 50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. 51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. 52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way” (Mark 10:46-52).*

I’ve entitled this sermon, “Gracious compassion to desperate sinners.”

## For this I will be inquired of

God is sovereign in salvation. He saves whom He will. He saves as He will, in the manner that He will. God saves by His sovereign grace alone! What moved God to save any sinner? Not anything in the sinner! Does God look to worms for motives to act? Does He take counsel from the pot to decide whether to make it and for which purpose? No! God saves for this reason: to the praise of the glory of His grace (Eph. 1:6, 12, 14)! He looks for nothing in man, but He finds reason in Himself to show mercy to sinners! Yet! In His sovereign will, it pleases God to save sinners by convincing them of their great need! It pleases God to save sinners by moving them to cry to Him in their need, and the LORD hears the cry of His own Spirit from the heart of sinners. When they cry, He saves them. (They cry. He hears, God saves (Ps. 34:17)). God’s Spirit in this scripture and others, declares beforehand what He will do -- how He saves -- that we might recognize His work.

The Lord describes how He saves by the work of Jesus Christ and by His work in their hearts that we might know it is His work, a work of pure grace. Those God saves, He drives to God in Christ! If you are not led to Christ, you are not saved by the Spirit of Christ! God promises sinners that in looking to Christ they will be saved. He puts that promise in scripture. And we see that promise fulfilled in the account of these two blind men. The Spirit of God tells poor sinners in Psalm 50:15: "*Call (Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:10-17; Joel 2:32) upon me (Christ the Lord) in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*" (Ps. 50:15). Who was glorified by the healing of this blind man? Our triune God! But God is glorified in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:1-4)! And in Ezek. 36 God says what He will do in His everlasting, unalterable covenant of grace. He gives unconditional promise of grace after unconditional promise of grace. In v36 He sums it up by saying, "*I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it*" (Ezek. 36:36). Then, at the very end, as part of that same covenant of grace, the LORD says, "*Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this (His promised blessings in His covenant of grace) be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them*" (Ezek. 36:37). Therefore, we should oppose every wicked thought that because God is sovereign He will save me whether or not I seek Him. He will not! God is a God of mercy in Jesus Christ. And though He is gracious to sinners in Christ, yet He will be sought for that mercy from every sinner He saves to the glory of Christ (Ps. 50:15).

## From Jericho to the cross

Now, in v46 it says they came to Jericho, and as they went out of Jericho... Jesus came to Jericho on His way to the cross. Jesus said He came to give His life a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28). Jericho and everything in it had long been a cursed by God. Joshua burned Jericho with fire. And he pronounced a curse on the man who would rebuild it (Joshua 6:26). Jesus gave Himself to pay the ransom required by God to redeem, actually free God's elect, from the curse of God's law against them for their sin! "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*" (Gal. 3:13). Hence, the cursed city. He came to the cursed city where the people were identified with the curse. He gave Himself a ransom for

what? To redeem His people from the curse of the law. He would not be kept back from this great purpose. See how He here fulfills the result of His ransom to these blind men! If Jesus Christ gave Himself to pay the ransom price to God for our redemption, then we will surely be set free. If Christ died for us, we have been set free from the guilt of our sin (*“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity”* (Titus 2:14)). We have been set free from the curse of God’s law. Not only have we been set free from our guilt and the punishment of our sin, but by His redemption we will be set free from the blindness of our unbelief. In Hebrews the Lord says, *“By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us”* (Heb. 9:12). He has already obtained eternal redemption for His people by the ransom price of His own blood. Having obtained eternal redemption for God’s elect, He sets them free from their unbelief that they might know their Redeemer and their redemption in Him. The writer to the Hebrews continues. *“How much more (than animal sacrifices) shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Heb. 9:14)?*

Illus: Think of a king issues a pardon to a prisoner. Immediately, as soon as the pardon is issued, the prisoner is free from all punishment. But until the prisoner learns of the king’s pardon, he does not know -- he has not received -- the peace and joy of that pardon in himself. Just so. The high King of heaven obtained our eternal redemption by His own blood and our sins are all forgiven for His name’s sake (Heb. 1:3; Lev. 16:30; Rom. 4:25; 5:9; Eph. 4:32). And because we are forgiven, God sends the Spirit of Christ into our hearts to create a new man, a new heart in us; to raise us from death to life and light with faith in Christ (Col. 2:13; 2 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 4:4-6). The Gospel now becomes gospel to us! Our conscience is purged by the application of Christ’s blood in faith, enabling us to see that our sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake. It is Christ from His throne that gives this liberty of conscience to us, this light and life in our soul. Acts 5:31 says, *“Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance and forgiveness of sins”* (Acts 5:31). The forgiveness that He obtained for His elect by His offering to God. Jesus, from His exalted throne as Mediator told Paul, *“**17 I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light (from unbelief to faith), and***

*from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me” (Acts 26:18). Saving faith is faith in Jesus Christ (“faith that is in me”). As a blind man cannot give himself sight, cannot open his own eyes, neither can we exercise our free will to believe Christ as He is revealed in the Gospel! We’re in the dark! The Gospel is the light of God! We can’t see it. We are blind in unbelief. Faith to see the light of the Gospel must be given by God.*

## The earnest, urgent cry of a blind sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ

(v46-47) A great crowd of people passed the place where Bartimaeus was sitting and begging by the roadside. He asked, when he heard them passing, what does it mean? The people said Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. So Bartimaeus immediately began to cry out! His cry was urgent. Jesus was passing by! Think about the urgency in his cry. Think about who was passing by! It was the Creator and Upholder of all things, who made the seeing and the blind (Ex. 4:11). God in a real human body and soul is passing by! Bartimaeus hears the crowd as they pass. Perhaps Jesus had already gone beyond him! So he immediately begins to cry out! Can you hear his urgency?! He in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells passes by! He thought that if he did not find mercy from Christ at this time, he may never obtain mercy! That creates an urgency, doesn’t it? When the Lord saves a sinner, He makes salvation the only thing in the world that matters to him. Sin becomes a burden. David sinned against God. But though he had sinned, his sin wasn’t a burden until the LORD burdened him with it. Then he began to cry! “**3** *When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. 4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer (no strength, pain)” (Ps. 32:2-3). God made David’s sin THE issue. David said this in Ps. 116, “**1** I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. 2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. 4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful” (Ps. 116:3-4). Isn’t the work of grace in*

the heart of a sinner wonderful!? Do these operations of the Spirit of Christ in the heart of a David, a sinner, resonate with you? Has God has so burdened your heart to cry out of your guilt and ignorance and enslavement to sin to be saved and find your salvation in Christ alone? That is God's work! "*The promise is unto you... and as many as the Lord our God shall call*" (Acts 2:39). Has God made you cry to Him to know that Christ is all life? All of your salvation?! That is what we see in Bartimaeus. God brought him to Christ with a desperate, urgent cry for mercy.

David, in Psalm 130:1 said, "*Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD*" (Psalms 130:1). The righteous cry to Christ and to be found in Christ alone! But Job said, "*the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them*" (Job 36:13). Hypocrites do not cry to God in Christ when they are afflicted! Crying to the Lord Jesus Christ is the work of the Spirit of God to ransomed sinners who have been made righteous by the blood of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:21)! Therefore, the Lord says, "*The righteous cry (righteous by Christ's righteousness), and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles*" (Ps. 34:17). What a promise! They cry. He hears! He saves! When the light of your soul is dark what do you do?! What do you do when you cannot even pray, and when you do, you wonder if you even know God? Do you say, "Lord! I am ignorant and sinful in all my ways! I don't know if I even know you!" God afflicts hypocrites with trouble, but they do not cry. But the righteous cry! Do I cry? Do you say in your conscience and with your lips, "Lord! Have mercy on me! Let me see Christ as all my salvation!" The LORD says, "*Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*" (Ps. 50:15). The Lord Jesus Christ is glorified when He saves desperate sinners! He hears the cry of His own Spirit. If Christ has ransomed your soul, you will cry out of the depths. "*The Spirit (of Christ in us) helpeth our infirmities (weaknesses): for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us (in us) with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he (Christ on His throne hears His own Spirit from the heart of a believing sinner) that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God*" (Rom. 8:26-27)! The mind of the Father, the Spirit and Christ is one, the same will and purpose and people and love! Christ on His throne hears His Spirit

in us and fulfills the eternal will of the triune God for His people! He will save to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25)! The Spirit of Christ will point you to Christ to know that He is all of your salvation! I need to know if God accepts me! Don't you? I see my helplessness to make myself acceptable to God, my helplessness against my sin, my helplessness to believe apart from His grace! I cannot bring the light of life into my soul! I cannot open my own eyes. I cannot be saved unless the Lord Jesus Christ speaks salvation to me from His word! And so we see this blind man in Mark 10 crying out to the Lord Jesus Christ! And notice what he says: "*Jesus, Son of David! Have mercy on me!*"

## O Lord, Jesus, Son of David!

The people had said that "Jesus of Nazareth" passed by. Bartimaeus had never seen Jesus. He was blind! He had never seen Him perform a miracle. But he had heard about Him. He had learned that Jesus was more than merely the Jesus of Nazareth! His cry revealed that. His cry revealed who he actually believed Jesus to be, the Lord! He said, "*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!*" And Matthew says that when the two blind men cried they said, "*Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David*" (Matt. 20:30)! So Bartimaeus therefore believed that He was the Lord, Jesus, and Son of David. Now look at Psalm 118:25. See what the Lord says would happen as Jesus came into Jerusalem. "*25 Save now, I beseech thee (Hosanna), O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity (spiritual blessings to my soul earned by Christ's redeeming blood, Eph. 1:3). 26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD*" (Ps. 118:25-26). Who is the One who comes in the name of the LORD? See v22! "*22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. 23 This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes*" (Ps. 118:22-23). The One who comes is the Lord Jesus Christ! This prophecy is fulfilled in Matt. 21, which occurs shortly after Jesus healed Bartimaeus! "*The multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna (save now, we beseech thee!, O! Save us!!) to the Son of David (Christ): Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest*" (Matt. 21:9). "*The chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeas'd*"

(Matt. 21:15). Why? Because “Son of David” is Christ! So when this blind man cries out “Son of David!” He is saying, the Lord, Jesus, Christ! “O Lord! Jesus! Christ! Save now, we beseech thee!” He was crying, believing in his heart that the One he cried to was the Lord of heaven, Jesus, the Christ of God!

## Mercy

Bartimaeus did not call on Jesus as an equal: “Jesus! Restore my sight!” He did not even call upon Him as a servant calls on his master: “Master, open my eyes!” **He called upon Jesus as a sinner calls upon God in his Mediator!** He called upon God in his Mediator as a sinner calls upon God in his Mediator! He knew he could not make himself see! No man could do that! Only God can open the eyes of the blind! He needed mercy from God! So He called on Him as Lord. And he called on Him as Christ. He called on Him as the One God anointed to save His people (Isa. 35:5)! He believed Jesus was the Lord of glory, the Christ of God. And by the Spirit of Christ, Himself he cries with that God-given faith!

## Bartimaeus

(Mark 10:46) Now Bartimaeus is a name that means “son of Timaeus.” And Timaeus means “unclean.” Therefore, Bartimaeus means “Son of the unclean!”

- **“Son of the unclean.”** We all are sons of the unclean because we are all guilty of Adam’s sin. “*By one man's disobedience (Adam's transgression) many (all born to Adam) were made sinners*” (Rom. 5:19). We are not only all guilty, but we all have Adam’s fallen sin nature. David said, “*I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me*” (Ps. 51:5). Therefore this name describes all whom the Lord saves! We are the sons of the unclean.
- **Sin blinds our souls.** And he was blind. Scripture says, “*There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God*” (Rom. 3:11). Spiritual blindness keeps a man from understanding his sin before God, his corruptions. It keeps him from understanding God in Christ. And it keeps him from understanding His salvation and seeking salvation from God in Christ alone! What is spiritual blindness? “*We walk by faith and not by*



*sight*” (2 Cor. 5:7). Faith is sight given to a resurrected soul (Rom. 8:10 - “*the Spirit is life because of righteousness*”; Gal. 2:20 - “*I live by the faith of the Son of God!*”). With life comes light and the sight of faith in our souls. But before that life and light are given to us, we are blind. We do not seek God. We are in the spiritual blindness of unbelief. In our blindness we do not know God; not by nature. We do not believe God. “*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him (he doesn’t understand them; they therefore seem foolish - we often call complicated things ‘dumb’ because we don’t understand): neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*” (1 Cor. 2:14). **We only see when God reveals Himself to us in the Lord Jesus Christ!** Not just when God opens our eyes, but when He opens our eyes to see Himself in His Son and in His salvation (Matt. 11:27; John 14:6-9). Jesus said, “*I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*” (John 14:6,9). Unless we believe Christ, we cannot know the way to God, we cannot know the truth of God (if we do not know the truth of God, we have no saving truth. ‘Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.’). And we cannot have life from God. “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life (as Jesus also said in John 6:40, ‘he that seeth the Son and believeth on Him’ hath everlasting life): and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him*” (John 3:36). Life in the soul is seeing Christ by faith (John 17:3)! There is no faith without life, and there is no life with faith. They are inseparable. Christ must give us both life and faith (Acts 3:16): faith to see Christ as our all. And this life and faith are seen in the persistent, earnest and urgent cry of this blind man to Christ for mercy to see Christ as all of our salvation!

- **Bartimaeus was a beggar.** He sat by the wayside begging (Mark 10:46). He had nothing to bring to God to get mercy! In ourselves, we have no spiritual value. That man is blessed who sees himself poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3). We are in need only. Everything in salvation and life must be freely given to us by the grace of our sovereign Savior! Beggars cannot remove the guilt of one of their sins before God! Beggars cannot clean their heart of one evil! Beggars cannot decide for Jesus; he cannot produce faith in his own heart!

David therefore prayed, “*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin*” (Ps. 51:2), because David knew he couldn’t do it. Bartimaeus was unclean. He needed Christ to wash him. He was blind. He needed Christ to give him sight to see his only salvation in Christ and Him crucified. And he was unable to give himself this sight. So he came to Jesus. And asked Him, “Give me what I cannot do for myself.” In all of his shameful and helplessness He cries to the Lord Jesus Christ!

## Only the blind cry

We just read in Ps. 34:17 that the righteous cry (see page 5). It is strange here that there was a large crowd of people, “a great number” (v46). But there was only this man that was crying! Matthew said there were two. That’s not very many! Jesus said, “*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten...*” (Rev. 3:17). Christ only chastises His people. He afflicts them to know their need to make them call upon Him. “**12** *He brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. 13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses*” (Ps. 107:12-13). Only the blind men see their great need of Christ! “*For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see*” (John 9:39). Isn’t that ironic? Only blind men see their need of Christ. Jesus said, “*No man can come to **Me**, except the Father which hath sent me **draw** him: and I will raise him up at the last day*” (John 6:44).

## Rebuked by the crowd

What did the crowd do when Bartimaeus cried out? Did they join with him in his cry? No. “*Many charged him that he should hold his peace. But he cried the more, a great deal!*” The crowd tried to suppress the unrest in this man’s soul. But the Spirit of God had put it there. “God, have mercy upon me, THE sinner” (Luke 18:13)! **Bartimaeus could not be quieted by the crowd, until God in Christ answered him!**

The Psalmist says, “*As for me, I will call upon God (God in Christ); and the LORD shall save me(!). Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud:*

*and He shall hear my voice*" (Ps. 55:16-17). "Cast thy burden upon the LORD. He shall sustain thee. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Ps. 55:22). When a hypocrite is afflicted, he will not cry to Christ alone for salvation. "*They have not cried unto me with their heart*" (Hosea 7:14). **A hypocrite, strangely, can tolerate the dung of his own righteousness as a substitute for the righteousness of Christ that is only seen by faith.** Have you noticed that about your own righteousness? That it is as disgusting and nauseating and revolting as dung? And it won't hold you up in your conscience and in the day of judgment? You only sink in dung! A hypocrite seeks the approval of men and his own blind conscience. Remember king Saul? When Samuel told him God had rejected him from being king, he said to Samuel, "*I have sinned! Yet honor me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people*" (1 Sam. 15:30)! His great fear was his shame and the loss of honor before men! A hypocrite seeks the approval of men and his own blind conscience. Therefore, a hypocrite can find comfort in his own works because men applaud external humility, will worship and all that appears outwardly to be righteousness! But thanks be unto God! **He will not allow His loved ones to rest in any satisfaction for sin or find any comfort in their conscience from anything that may be called theirs, but only in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ by His representative life and substitutionary death for chosen sinners!**

Now, the faceless crowd rebuked the crying blind man: "Be quiet!", they scolded. Why would this crowd tell this man in his misery to be quiet? Why did they stop their ears to his crying!? Remember Joseph? His brothers cast him into the pit. They saw the anguish of his soul. When he pleaded with them to show him mercy, they stopped their ears; they would not hear his cries (Gen. 42:21; Amos 6:6; Isa. 53:3)! The reason the crowd scolded this blind sinner who earnestly and urgently cried for mercy to Jesus is **because they had never known the anguish of soul that this blind man now knew!** They did not know their own uncleanness and blindness before God! They were blind to their blindness. (Until we are awakened by the Spirit of God, we think in our self-righteous sub-conscience, "*I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*" (Rev. 3:17)). They did

not know that only Christ could wash them and make them clean. And they did not know the light of life. And they did not miss it! The blind man's cry represents the cry of the needy soul! A needy soul says, "I don't know if God accepts me! I don't know if He will! I don't know how He saves. I don't know how I can be accepted by Him! I see my foul self. I see my helplessness to bring one thing and do one thing God can accept! I am unable to comfort myself. I cannot make myself see! I cannot open my eyes. I cannot bring the light of life into my soul! How, then, can I be saved, unless the Lord who alone is salvation speaks salvation to me?!"

Think of the anguish now in the soul of this blind man! It is at this point that the crowd ordered him to be quiet! It is strange that in a crowd of this size, there would be no one in it except this blind man crying out for mercy! And it is strange that when he did, they rebuked his outburst! It is strange that the crowd would discourage him from crying, from calling on the Lord Jesus Christ! Is there not more than a blind man who needs a Savior?!

Why does the Lord Jesus hear the poor when he cries(x2)?! I think I know. Because the Lord of glory, our Mediator, Jesus, the Christ, anointed to save His people by the ransom of Himself to God for them, knows what it is to be poor in spirit. He knows what it is to be deprived of the light of God, and the sense of God's presence in His own soul! **He hears the poor when they cry because He cried when He was made poor by the debt of the sins of His people, which were laid on Him, and which He made His own, to remit to God the uttermost farthing by His own sufferings and death!**

He who is all compassion was denied compassion. "*I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul*" (Psalms 142:4)! The Lord Jesus Christ felt the loss of God's own presence in His soul! He cried out of the darkness while He hung on the cross, "*My God, my God! Why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring*" (Ps. 22:1)!?" The light of the sun, when Jesus hung on the cross, was withheld from the human nature of Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2). For salvation's light to shine on us, He had to bear the darkness and

loss of the sense of God's presence in His own human body and soul (2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:8; 1 John 1:7; Isa. 53:10 - 'his soul an offering for sin'; Isa. 53:11 - 'travail of his soul'; Isa. 53:12 - 'he hath poured out his soul unto death'; Matthew 26:38 - 'He saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death')! "O my God, I cry in the daytime (in the daytime as God Himself abandoned Him...in the daytime it was night time in His soul from the loss of the sense of God's presence! Who can understand this darkness Christ knew!?), but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent" (Ps. 22:2).

Why does the Lord Jesus hear the poor when he cries? It is because as God, our Lord Jesus is merciful (Ex. 34:7; Ps. 136 (x26, 'His mercy endureth forever')), and as man He cried out of a sense of the loss of God's presence in His soul. That is why He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities! "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (weaknesses); but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). When He hung on the cross, when He felt the loss of God's presence, like Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him" (Job 13:15)! "I waited patiently for the LORD, and He heard my cry" (Ps. 40:1)! "He trusted in the LORD (He rolled Himself) upon Jehovah" (Ps. 22:7)! He waited... He patiently waited. He trusted. He did not raise accusations. He justified God for treating Him so! "Thou art holy" (Ps. 22:3)! He knew what it was to suffer this blindness! He knew what it was to cry. He waited. He trusted. He declared God to be just! Yet He knew this anguish of soul. Why can He have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way? Because He suffered the weight of that sin that separates the soul from the light of God! "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 5:7)! The Lord Jesus Christ is a High Priest who "can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way" because He was made sin. And He hears the cry of His people because He felt the burden of their sin as His own burden of sin! This is what it means when the Lord as Mediator looked with compassion on this crying, blind sinner!

Now, back in Mark 10:48, Bartimaeus cried out, “*Son of David, have mercy on me!*” Do we know that the Lord Jesus here hears the cry of His own Spirit? Can’t you hear the resonance in the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ? Not only from the cry of His own Spirit in the heart of this sinner, but the anguish that the burden of his sin bear in his soul, and the burden that the Lord Jesus Christ would soon know Himself for His people as Mediator, as Surety? It says, “*And Jesus stood still*” (Mark 10:49)! The prophet Malachi said that the Lord Jesus is “*the Sun of Righteousness*” (Mal. 4:2). When God delivered five kings into the hand of Joshua and Israel in battle (Joshua 10), Joshua cried to the LORD in the hearing of all Israel, “*Sun! Stand thou still upon Gibeon*” (Josh. 10:12)! “*There was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel*” (Josh. 10:14)! It had never happened before or since, until this day! When the Sun of Righteousness hears the cry of a sinner and stands still in compassion to show mercy! \The saving compassion of Christ to crying sinners is a far greater miracle than a man commanding the sun in the sky to stand still so that that LORD might finish His judgment on the enemies of His people! A sinner cries for mercy from the Sun of Righteousness. God, in the sinner’s Mediator, the Son of God in our nature, stands still! Is there any greater encouragement to sinners in all the word of God than this, that God in Christ hears the cry of souls needy for salvation!? Look not upon your crying! Look to Him who promised to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him (Heb. 7:25)! God is great in mercy in Jesus Christ! He is willing and able to save helpless sinners all by Himself (Heb. 1:3)!

I can think of no greater comfort than the comfort given to this man when the Lord commanded him to be called. Isn’t this the Lord Jesus sending the Gospel to His people? “*Call them!*” “*And they called the blind man*” (Mark 10:49). Paul was called by this grace of Christ! “**15** *When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,* **16** *To reveal his Son in me*” (Gal. 1:15-16). This is Christ’s command to preach His Gospel. And this is the work of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of His redeemed people. Every believing sinners is rightly named “*The called of Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 1:6), “*the called according to [His] purpose*” (Rom. 8:28).

## Be of good comfort, rise, He calleth thee

What a comfort to be called by Christ! Jesus Christ the Lord calls sinners to come believing Him to find mercy! *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”* (Matt. 11:28). Is that not the call of Christ to sinners?! *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”* (John 6:37)! *“27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish”* (John 10:27-28). If God gave you to Christ as His sheep, He calls you, He knows you as His own, you will hear of Him and believe Him (John 6:40). He gives you eternal life. You shall never perish. Not any can pluck His sheep out of His hand! Our warrant for coming is His call to sinners in the Gospel. With the Psalmist we say, *“Thou hast given commandment to save me”* (Ps. 71:3).

Jesus commanded the blind man to be brought to Him. And so the Lord Jesus commands us to come to Him. Saving faith is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 26:18; John 3:15-16; 36). *“Those who are sanctified through faith that is in me”* (Acts 26:18). When Lazarus had been dead four days in the tomb, Jesus *“cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth”* (John 11:43)! Lazarus came forth. God promised in Ezekiel that He would bring His people out of their deadness in sin and give them life. *“You shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live”* (Ezek. 37:12-14). And so to every believer, scripture says that God gives life at His appointed time (Acts 2:39,47; 13:48). *“When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted (son of the unclean) in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live”* (Ezek. 16:6)! The NT says it this way in the book of Ephesians. *“When we were dead in sins, He hath quickened us together with Christ for by grace ye are saved”* (Eph. 2:5-6).

He called the blind man to Himself. This man cried to Jesus Christ the Lord for mercy. And so we too must be called by the Lord Jesus Christ to Himself.

## Casting away his garment, he came to Jesus

The call of the Lord Jesus Christ is a call that produces the effect that the He intends. His call does what He intends to accomplish by it. Jesus Christ never calls a sinner to life who does not live (Ezek. 16:6; John 11:43; Eph. 2:4). That is what the word “effectual” means. It gets the job done. It accomplishes God’s will. This man was effectually called. He put aside his garment and actually came to Him.

Isaiah 55 says that we sinners are deceived. We “*spend money for [what is] not bread*” when we are hungry! And expend our “*labor for [what] does not satisfy*” (Isa. 55:2). Isn’t that blindness! But here, this sinner, who was blind, who cried for mercy to Christ, and was called by Him, cast away his garment and came to the Lord Jesus Christ! Everything else was completely unimportant, but to have salvation, and to have Christ.

Paul said, “*3 we are the circumcision (true, in the spirit), which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (as this man cast away his garment). 4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless (among men, he was the best of the best! If anyone had good reason to trust anything he was or could do to save or help save or keep himself saved, it was the apostle Paul!). 7 But what things were gain to me (those things I blindly considered to benefit, to profit me in the things of God), those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom (to lay hold on Him) I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, (the ‘faith of Christ’ is faith that belongs to Christ as the Author and object of faith) the righteousness which is of God by (on)*”



*faith*” (Php. 3:3-9). All that we call ours and think of as ours is disgusting when we see our all in Christ! This is these are the garments we cast away (Mark 10:49). And we wonder that we could have ever been so blind as to trust in ourselves or what we could do!! It terrifies us to think we that we would were it not for the almighty grace of Christ arresting us in our souls and bringing us to Himself by His gracious and almighty call!

## What do you want Me to do to you?

And so it says here (Mark 10:51) that when he came to Jesus, Jesus answered his cry for mercy. Notice what He asks him: “*What do you want me to do to you?*” “*What do you desire that I should do to you*” (Matt. 20:32; Mark 10:51)? The LORD! The LORD stood still and called to bring him near. Remember what God said to Solomon, “*Ask what I shall give thee*” (1 Kings 3:5)?

Ask?! What do you want?! What do you need?! The LORD of glory (Col. 2:9; 1 Cor. 2:8) stands before you in your nature (Heb. 2:14). The Creator and Upholder of all things (Heb. 1:2-3; Col. 1:16-17)! The One in whose hand your breath and life is (Dan. 5:23), who holds eternity in His will and power (John 3:35; Heb. 1:2; John 5:22-23), who holds your eternal destiny in the balance, He stands before you now! What do you want? What do you want, dear sinner?!

Have you ever wondered “What would I say to Him if He asked me that question?” What would you ask if the Lord of glory called you to stand before Him and said, “*Ask what I shall give you*” (1 Kings 3:5)!? What would you ask! Choose your words carefully! Examine your need in light of the Gospel of God’s grace! Consider who you are asking! “*He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*” (Eph. 3:20)! “You are coming to a King,” John Newton said, “large petitions you should bring!” Consider His wisdom. Consider His power. Consider that there is nothing too hard for the Lord! And consider that in His compassion He will do all that your needy soul requires and desires of Him!

There is help in no other! **But all help is found in Him!** Salvation is in Christ alone! All salvation is in Him! He Himself gives what He Himself accomplished! What do I want from Him?! Let this question sink deep into our souls. Let His will of compassion open the springs of my need and cause them to bubble up and pour out the great need of my soul that only the sacrifice of the Son of God could procure! Ask of Him what His own sacrifice has purchased! Our redemption! What would you give for full cleansing!? And a perfect covering, in which God Himself takes delight and upholds to this universe as justifying righteousness! “Lord, let me see the King in His glorious salvation of me! Let me worship Him with His people (Php. 3:3; John 4:24; Ps. 106:4-5). Let me rejoice with those He has loved from everlasting! Those He has chosen! Those on whom He has shed abundant grace to overcome all their rebellion and ignorance and failures and blindness and helplessness and unbelief (Rom. 6:14,17; 1 John 5:4)! Lord!! Let me hear this one thing in my heart: From your word, say unto my soul, “*I AM thy SALVATION*” (Ps. 35:3; Isa. 12:1-3; Ps. 27:1; Luke 2:30; Matt. 1:21; 1 Tim. 1:15; Rom. 3:24-25; 4:5; 5:6-10; Heb. 7:25; Heb. 1:3; 9:24-26; 10:1-19)! According to all the mercy and blessings of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ and your everlasting covenant in Him, Lord, “*Do as you have said*” (2 Sam. 7:25; 1 Chr. 17:23; Ezek. 36:37; John 3:33)! “*Speak the word only*” (Matt. 8:8)! Give me that faith that is more precious than gold that perishes (1 Pet. 1:7). “*Lord, that I might receive my sight*” (Mark 10:51)!!

### Thy faith hath saved (G4982) thee

“*And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole*” (Mark 10:52). In the margin of my Bible it is “saved.” The word translated “whole” (9x) is most often (93x) translated “saved.” In the historical account, Jesus actually opened the eyes of a physically blind man! But in the Gospel, He says, “Go thy way, thy faith thee!”

He believed Jesus to be Lord and Christ! He believed only Christ could save him. And so he cried to the Lord Jesus! And he could only be satisfied if the Lord Jesus saved him! Therefore, Jesus says, receive what you believe me for. Believers in Christ are given what they believe. They believe Him. They believe Him only as

all in their salvation! They do not look to anything that is theirs. They consider only Him and what He has done! Faith cries “Christ alone” is all my salvation!

In the historical account, the blind man was healed. But the Gospel preached by the Spirit of God from this miracle is that sinners. The miracle is that all sinners are saved in looking to Christ. Saving faith teaches us that Jesus is Lord and Christ. Saving faith believes there is salvation in no other (Acts 4:12; Isa. 45:22) than Christ alone (Gal. 2:16,21). Saving faith is only satisfied to be saved by Christ alone. Saving faith receives salvation because saving faith is the gift of God that enables me to see and hear what Christ has already done for my soul! What you believe is what you receive. Every believer can say, “In the bottom of my heart I believe that Christ is my only Savior!” We doubt ourselves all the time. But we never doubt that Christ is God and man and has accomplished our salvation by Himself according to the will of God that He has revealed to us in the Gospel from scripture! God receives me, because He receives Him! And He receives me as He receives His Son (John 17:23-24)!

### He received his sight and followed Jesus in the way

Jesus said, “Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole” (Mark 10:52)! Faith is not a one-time act. If once you believe Christ, you will continue to believe Him. If you believe Christ only once, then you have never believed Him at all! My sheep hear His voice, and they follow Me, and they shall never perish (Col. 2:6; 2 Cor. 5:7)! You walk in the same way that you received Him. If the Lord saved you, you were saved as an empty-handed, unclean blind beggar. When the Lord saved you, you had no experience to take comfort, but only in believing that all God requires of you, He has provided and received and now finds in His Son! And you were never so happy to know that salvation is in Christ alone! I wonder if Bartimaeus, as he followed Jesus, was one of those who began to lead the chorus: “*Son of David, O save us now*” (Matt. 21:9)! On His way to the cross, to pay the ransom of Himself to God, Jesus hears this poor, unclean blind man calling to have what that ransom would obtain, and the Lord of glory stand still, calls him, and opens his eyes to see his salvation, full and free, in Christ alone!