



What I Learned From a Blind Beggar Named Bartimaeus

- I. How to be Saved
- II. How to Read the Bible
- III. How to Pray

I. How to be Saved

1. God works with us where He finds us. Where are you and where are you going? Bartimaeus was going no where. He was not even on the way. The Bible says that he was on the “way-side.” It is usually not until we break down on the road of life that we realize something is broken. He was on the stretch of road between Jericho and Jerusalem. One was a symbol of Eternal life, the other of destruction. Remember when the walls fell down? We all live along this road. Many were hurrying down the Jericho Road having no idea where they were going. The Bible says that there is a “*way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death* (Prov. 14:12). Where are you? That is what God asked Adam in the garden. Bartimaeus was on the way-side.

2. God uses what we have. Bartimaeus was blind, but he was not deaf. Everyone is supposed to have five senses. He lost one, but not all. He “heard” God coming by. At first he just heard a commotion, and did not know what it was, but soon discovered that it was the Son of God coming by. “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” There is hope for all who has that much sense.

3. God works with what we don’t have. God helps needy people. A beggar is the best illustration of a person in need we could possibly imagine. Bartimaeus knew he was needy. What he needed most was God, but he did not quite know that yet. He would settle for a few coins. That would make him happy. What do you need most? Don’t think as small as Bartimaeus’ cup. Think larger. No, you’re still not thinking big enough. You need God. That is our greatest need. Until we know this, we are just a blind beggar that needs to think bigger. No one was ever Saved that didn’t think they needed to be. Those who think they don’t “need” God, need to think again. Those who know that they need God, are half way to heaven.

4. God uses His own Word. Isaiah wrote what it would be like when the Messiah would come. Bartimaeus was able to “connect the dots” when he heard Jesus was near. Isaiah said that “*then the eyes of the blind shall be opened.*” That gave him hope. Now Jesus was “*passing by.*” Every time the Bible is opened God is passing by.

5. God gives grace to the humble. The plea for mercy from a sincere heart is enough to stop a loving God in His tracks. The Son of God was on His way to die on the cross for all of Bartimaeus’ sins. Would He not stop to attend to this little matter and call for mercy? Would He not enable a poor blind man to “see the light?” He would. Admit your need. See yourself a sinner. Ask God to forgive you of your sin and have mercy on you. He will. He says so in His Word. He came to save us from the darkness and poverty of sin.

II. How to Read the Bible

If “*faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God,*” then I want more. I want to know how to get more out of the Bible. Bartimaeus and I are not finished asking questions. Ask these three simple ones.

1. What does it mean? Bartimaeus asked “*what it meant,*” when he heard the commotion (Lk. 18:36). When we hear God by reading His Word, we too should ask, “what it means?” Many people never stop to ask what things mean. God has surrounded us with a million lessons and we are blind if we don’t see them, and we are dumb if we don’t ask what they mean. I must read the Bible today and ask, “what does it mean?”

2. What does it mean to me? That the Promised One was passing by meant a lot to Bartimaeus personally. It meant that he did not have to remain blind. He was holding Isaiah’s promise like a savings bond. Would not God honor and keep His Word? When we read the Word of God we should ask, “what does it mean to me?” God will tell us.

3. What am I going to do about it? In the Bible, the Gospels are followed by the Book of Acts. This is no accident. It is by design. Do not just be a “hearer,” be a doer. Bartimaeus did something. He seized the moment. He made the most of it. He called out. He shouted. He made a commotion until he was brought before Jesus. After making the prayer request of a lifetime and receiving his answer, the Bible says “*he followed Jesus in the way.*” He went from the “way-side” to walking beside the One who is the Way. We should not just read interesting things in the Bible. We need to step out into the Way and follow Jesus. Don’t just sit there do something.

III. How to Pray

1. See prayer as a great opportunity. Bartimaeus may have been blind, but he recognized an opportunity when he saw one. Many were more blind and deaf than he that day. Most failed to see opportunity, let alone hear it knocking. Prayer is a great opportunity. Do not miss it. Isa. 55:6 tells us to call upon God “*while He is near.*” Bartimaeus made his request “*when he was come near*”(Lk.18:40). We are never nearer God than when we pray.

2. Pray intelligently. He knew what He wanted. “Ask and you shall receive.” Bartimaeus did not hesitate. He did not have to think about it because he thought about it every morning of every day. It was the desire of his heart. Not everyone knows what they want, or what they need the most. Some ask for things that will not make them better, but worse. Better not to have eyes at all if they will not look for heaven. If we are not sure what to ask for, we should sincerely pray for God’s will to be done. We can never go wrong in letting God choose for us.

3. Only pray good prayers. Don’t waste your time asking for bad things. Bartimaeus is an example of someone whose will was in harmony with God’s will. He held on to this promise like a promissory-note (perhaps Isaiah 35:5). It was to him a savings bond- and now fully persuaded that God was able to make it good, he wanted to cash it in. He asked specifically that he might receive his sight. Is what we are asking in accordance with God’s Word and our highest good? Sometimes what we want is not what is best for us. “*The desire of the righteous is only good...*” (Prov. 11:23).

God knows what is BEST. For some, eyesight is not the highest good- (remember when David used his eyes to gaze on Bathsheba- better had he been blind that day). Pray for the highest good. Some of us are not praying high enough. We are asking for silver- when God wants to give us gold.

4. Pray righteous prayers. Is it Right? Will giving us what we want hurt someone else? Will it necessitate God taking something away from another? Many of the things people want require that the other fellow do without. Ahab wanted Naboth's Vineyard. That was wrong. David wanted Urriah's wife. Wrong again! Is our prayer selfish? Don't pray that God will be on our side, pray that we will be on God's side. We may lose a battle, but God has never lost a war.

5. Pray spiritual prayers. Will this thing – if answered cause us to follow after Christ more closely? Immediately, Bartimaeus followed Him. Will we be closer to God? Will we be more faithful or less? Will that job, that car, that boat, that promotion build our soul and our love for God? Will it dampen our zeal or ruin our spiritual appetite? Sometimes a demotion is a spiritual promotion.

6. Pray in faith. Faith is always based on God's Word. Prayers of faith are prayed by the faithful. A prayer of faith trusts God to rule or overrule. Faith does not demand. Don't take- wait for God to give.

7. Pray for His name's sake. Will it bring glory to God, or is it all about self? Bartimaeus' request when answered brought glory to God.

8. Will it cause people to give praise unto God? Will more people come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior because God answers your prayer?

9. If God answers your prayer, will you follow Jesus? Bartimaeus threw away his old coat and followed the Lord. Forget about old coats, a new life comes with new things.

10. He followed Jesus in the way. He was no longer broken down on the side of the road. He was on his way. Jesus said, "*I am the way the truth and the life, not man cometh unto the father but by me*" (Jn. 14:6).

Conclusion:

Hear, See, Pray and Follow. Many tried to keep Bartimaeus silent (Mk. 10:48). Many would try to keep you in your place. The multitude (even the religious crowd) can be the enemy of prayer. The Devil will point out all your sins and tell you its too late. I hope you have more sense than that nonsense. Confess your sins, forsake them and pray all the more. I guess I am still a beggar in at least one way. I beg you, trust Jesus Christ to be your Savior, and then follow Him all the way.

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