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Campbell Chapel Free
Will Baptist Church

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Decisions, Decisions

Blind Bartimaeus

CAMPBELL CHAPEL FWBC - SERMON

I want to say this because it goes back to what I said a while ago. In my life and in your life, timing is everything. When we come to the crossroad in life, when we come up to the fork in the road; we want to call it timing and making the right decision at the right time means everything.

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February 25, 2009

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Mark 10:46-52

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.

A few weeks ago when we taught here last in the book of Mark; we talked about how the world describes greatness and how Jesus Christ describes greatness. When we look at greatness today, we look and say "How many people are under you? How many people are working for you?" We look at people like that as being great.

When Jesus looks at people and sees people that are great, He sees how many people that we are actually serving. [He's not looking at] how many people that are serving us, but how many people we are actually serving. That is who is great in the kingdom of God.

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.

The Bible says in verse 46, that He came to Jericho. As you read the accounts in the book of Luke and also in the book of Matthew, Mark only mentions one blind man. However, if you read the book Matthew chapter 20, you will find out that at this particular time that there are actually two blind men. This is not a contradiction at all. When you read the scriptures, history, and about some of these cities and the things that went on here, there are many things that we could talk about there. What I want

you to understand is this. As the blind man was sitting here, something takes place. The Bible mentions Jericho and we will talk about that in a minute.

The Bible said He came to Jericho and as He went out of Jericho... Jericho is a city about 17 or 18 miles from Jerusalem. Keep this in mind. Do you remember the story about Zacchaeus? Do you remember the little short guy, a tax collector? This is on this particular trip that Jesus healed him. Jesus is about six or seven days away from the cross. Just in a matter of days He is going to die. He has been teaching about greatness. He had been doing some great things. Now He is getting ready to leave Jericho and He encounters this blind man.

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.

Here Jesus is traveling and leaving Jericho and going to go towards Jerusalem. This is Passover season. As people would travel then, that was one of the commandments then that people were to come into Jerusalem and worship. They were commanded to do that—the males were. As they were traveling here, there is no doubt in my mind there would have been maybe hundreds and thousands of people because through the middle of Jericho was the main route that would go and run towards Jerusalem. As people would be pilgriming they would be taking their journey from wherever they lived at and come over to the main road.

If we were going to go to Portsmouth, Cincinnati or whatever; we would come off the little roads here and go down to 52 then take off down the road. That is what people were doing.

They were coming from their homes and their villages and hitting the main road. Many of them would be walking together and they would be going to Jerusalem to worship on Passover. The Bible says here that as they were traveling, as they were coming out of the city, they encounter a guy by the name of Bartimaeus. I thought about this guy today. Sometimes I sit and shut my eyes, and just think about things. This guy is blind and cannot see anything. I don't know how long he has been blind. He might have been blind all of his life. I don't know. However, he can't see. I don't whether you ever shut your eyes or not, but you can hear a lot better when you don't have your eyes open. You really can. If you are not looking at something, you can a whole lot of other stuff.

I thought about Bartimaeus and I never thought about this until today. He was sitting beside the road. Other blind men sat here with him. There is no doubt about that. He's sitting beside the road and he is blind. Do you know what he hears? He hears people walking. He hears people talking.

When we go into Wal*Mart, or whatever we may not hear people talking. If you were blind, you would hear a lot more than what we people hear.

Bartimaeus is hearing all kinds of stuff. He is hearing people talk about different things. He sits here, but on this particular day; He hears people walking. He hears people talking about a man called Jesus. They are probably saying all kinds of things about Jesus. The multitudes were...Jesus had been teaching that He is the Son of God, and that He was the Messiah. The religious crowd that was with Him was

probably making fun of Him. They were mocking Him. They were probably saying all kinds of hateful, discouraging, blasphemous things about Him. However, some of those folks that were in the crowd also were people that Jesus had healed. Some people who ate at Jesus' table when He fed them out on the grass or wherever it was at. Some of them had been touched physically by Jesus Christ.

Bartimaeus was sitting beside the road as they were traveling. He was hearing their feet on the gravel. He was hearing the crowd saying good things and bad things. However, when he heard it was Jesus; it got his attention. Do you know what he was hearing? Some were saying "I was there when He took the five loaves and two fishes and fed the thousands. I was there when He walked on water. I was there when He done this..." He heard people testifying about Jesus. Do you know what happens here? The Bible says he heard him. It tells us who his dad is. It tells us his name. He sat by the wayside begging. He was a beggar. That's all he could do. He couldn't work. He couldn't see. He didn't have all the things that we have today. Therefore, the way he ate was through 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.

He is hearing what everybody is testifying about Jesus. He is hearing the reports about Jesus and all the good things that He had done: the healings, and the raising from the dead. It wasn't very far from here where He had raised a man from the dead. Capernaum wasn't too far away, nor Bethsaida and all these places where so many great things had been done. He had heard about a lot of different things that Jesus had done. When he hears him coming in the crowd, then he begins to enquire "What's all the racquet about? What's going on here? What's all the talk about?" When he found out that it's Jesus of Nazareth in the crowd, he began to cry out. He says, "...Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me."

That is a wonderful verse there. He hears. He believes the testimony that he has heard about Jesus. He never saw him. He may have heard about Him and no doubt that he has. However, when he hears that He's [Jesus] is in the crowd, he begins to cry out: "...Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me."

I want to say this because it goes back to what I said a while ago. In my life and in your life, timing is everything. When we come to the crossroad in life, when we come up to the fork in the road; we want to call it timing and making the right decision at the right time means everything.

Jesus was leaving Jericho and going to Jerusalem and He would never be back to Jericho again. Bartimaeus was going to have to make a decision here on what he was going to do. He could have set there with the rest of the guys. There were thousands walking down the road. He was a beggar. There were many religious people here. By him starting to cry out probably was going to hurt the money that was going to go into his can. However, he wasn't worried about that. He saw a need far greater than a few coins in a can. He knew that he needed to be able to see. He knew that he had a need so much greater than the monies that he would have collected on that particular day. Not only did he know that he had a need but he also knew that Jesus Christ could supply that need. He believed what he had heard about Him. He believed the testimonies that he had heard about Him.

We will never ever get anything or anywhere with God if we don't believe what we have heard about Him. If we don't believe what He has testified in this Bible about Himself, then we will never get anywhere with Him.

Now we don't believe all the preachers. Everybody that has a Bible under their arm and every clown we have out here; we don't believe that. I am talking about what God, the God of heaven, has testified in His Word about Him, Himself, and His Son; if we don't believe that then we will never ever get anywhere with God.

He saw his need. He knew that Jesus could meet his need. Do you know what he starts doing? He starts crying out for mercy.

I have heard people—I know they meant well, but they didn't know what they were talking about. "Lord, just give me what is coming to me." Do you know what? Don't ever pray that way. You would be and I would be in a heap of trouble if we got what was coming to us. We would be burning in a lake of fire tonight if we got what was coming to us. Do you know what we need? We need mercy. We need to cry out for God; "God have pity on me." "Lord, have compassion on me." That is what we need folks. We don't need to have what we deserve or what is coming to us. We need to cry out for mercy. That is what he did.

He knew that he had a need. He that Jesus could meet the need. He began to cry out. Now he just was not talking with a voice like we are talking because there were thousands and thousands of people walking. I guarantee you if we would have been there on that particular day that Bartimaeus was screaming at the top of his lungs. Do you know why? He was screaming because he did not want this opportunity to pass him by. He did not know that Jesus wasn't coming back. He did not know that Jesus was going to Jerusalem and die in a few days. He did not know that. Do you know what he knew? He knew that this was a place in his life, a turning point, in his life; either he sits here and does nothing and lives the rest of his life blind or he makes an attempt. He knows that Jesus can heal him. He knows that Jesus has the power to heal him. Do you know what he decides to do? He comes up to the fork in the road and he says "I'm going to go this way because I know that is the way that Jesus Christ is."

He begins to cry out. "Jesus, thou son of David..." He recognized and he understood that not only about his humanity but he also understood that He [Jesus] was the Christ. He understood that He was the anointed one. When he says "Jesus, thou son of David..." That is what he is saying; "I know that you are the long awaited Messiah." That's faith, my friend. That is believing what the scriptures had testified about Jesus Christ. Truth? He believed Him. He began to cry out.

Look what happens here.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace...

So what the crowd is doing is saying "Why don't you just shut-up? You are just a beggar. This guy don't have time for you...You are just a beggar that is sitting beside the road. Just be quiet."

Many times in our lives, when we get to the fork in the road, or when we get to the place that we either have to go left or go right—Do you know what we do many times? Do you know what the enemy will tell us? “Don’t do anything.” We forfeit so much.

I was talking to this young man the other day. He had such great potential. He could have done so much for God. However, he came to a fork in the road and he knew what he needed to do. But because of looking out here at the world, the bright lights, the prestige, and all the things that along with what the world promises; he chose the wrong road. Not only did he sacrifice, not only did he throw away so much then many years ago, but the rest of his life until this day he has just been beat from pillar to post, from here to there.

I said that to say this. Bartimaeus was going to make a decision on this particular day that was going to change his life forever. The decisions that we make may not necessarily change our life forever, but there are decisions that we make quite frequently in our lives that do change our life forever. Whether we eat ham or sausage in the morning is probably not going to be a life changing thing unless you have high blood pressure and you kill yourself. That is not going to be a life changing thing. However the decisions that we make in life, and we know what they are, we can either make the right decision or we can make the wrong decision. Do you know what we had better do? We had better be making our decisions on what we heard about Jesus Christ. That is what he made his decision on.

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.

Bartimaeus cried and the crowd tried to get him to shut-up, but do you know what he did? The more they told him to be quiet, the louder he hollered. He didn’t hold his peace. The louder he got, the more they told him to be quiet. Jesus knows that we have need. He knew that Bartimaeus had a need. He knew what Bartimaeus was going to do. He knew everything. Didn’t He? Do you know what He didn’t do when He got up there where Bartimaeus was at? Do you know what He did? He listened. Bartimaeus initiated the conversation. “Lord, you are the son of David. I know who you are. Have mercy on me.” The crowds told him to shut-up.

49 And Jesus stood still...

The crowds are telling Bartimaeus to be quiet. He’s continuing to get louder and louder. When Jesus gets up here to where he is at, the Bible says He stops. He stands still.

Do you know what the Lord will do for you and me? When we come to those places and those times in our life, on life-changing decisions, I promise you that we make a bunch of them in life. When we come to those places in our life, I would hope that you would get on your face before Almighty God, and before saying “I am going to go right, or go left or whatever I am going to do.” I would make sure that the direction I go in is the direction that has been laid out in the Word of God. We know that we are going to go in the right direction and the direction that God is going to bless us in. If we don’t then we are going to get ourselves in a world of problems. The Bible says here that Jesus stood still. When we

are honest and sincere, it gets Jesus' attention. When we cry out for mercy, it gets His attention. He knows our heart. He knows that Bartimaeus is sincere.

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.

In other words, Jesus said, "Go get him. Go get the blind man." Do you know what they did? They go to Bartimaeus and say "Be of good cheer." In other words, what they are saying is "Quit hollering. You are going to get what you want here. You are going to get to see Him. Just be of good cheer. Be quiet. Everything is going to be fine. You are going to go see Him."

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

When you read that in the original, it tells us that he just didn't—they had big outer coat that went from their knees up. They slept in it. They wrapped up in it. It was like a big quilt or something. It brings out the idea that flung this thing off. He flung this thing off and he ran to Jesus. You might say "This guy is blind." That's okay; He wanted to get to where Jesus was at. He could hear. Because of what he had heard, he knew where Jesus was at.

Get this.

We can tell where Jesus is at because of what we hear. Not everywhere you go to church, Jesus is. Do you know why? We know that because of what we hear. There is a lot of truth in that, if you think about it. Not everywhere you go to church will you hear things that will promote the gospel or promote Jesus Christ. Many times you will hear things that will tear that down.

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.

Jesus already knew what he wanted. He knew what he needed. However, do you know what He wanted him to do? He wanted Bartimaeus to tell Him what he wanted. That is what he did.

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.

That was a very simple request. Wasn't it? Jesus said, "What do you need me to do? What do you want from me?" Bartimaeus said, "I want to 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.

I know that we did not have much time to talk about that the last time. Jesus heals this guy. He heals him and gives him his sight immediately because Bartimaeus has faith. Jesus said, "...thy faith hath

made thee whole..." That is what it says here. After he is healed, it did not take a week, a month or a year; but Jesus heals him immediately. He says something here that happened. He followed Jesus.

Get this.

When people get their spiritual eyes open, they will follow Jesus Christ. Truth? It is great what God does for us.