

FPFWC Christian Development



God Offers Praise

September 2021

Fall Quarter

September 18, 2021

Lesson #3 – Praise By Expecting and Following

SCRIPTURE TEXT – Mark 10:46-52

ICE BREAKERS-

1. *What does it mean to be persistent in prayer?*
2. *What connection is there between a person's faith and whether God answers their prayer? (A Courageous faith)*

Key Verse- 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.—Mark 10:51

LESSON BACKGROUND –

Blindness was a familiar condition in the ancient world, with the Bible itself using some form of the word *blind* dozens of times. *The Papyrus Ebers*, an Egyptian medical text of about 1500 BC, identifies various diseases of the eyes and suggests numerous remedies. These take the form of potions—ingredients of which are decidedly *not* prescribed today! In some cases, Egyptian physicians were advised to paint the mixture on the eyes of the patient, using a bird's feather.

As with many supposed remedies, healing may have occurred in spite of the treatment and therefore given the impression of effectiveness. But from our current vantage point, there was no reliable cure for blindness in Jesus' day and little understanding of its causes.

Many believed that blindness was a curse from God for some type of sinful behavior. The sins of the parents were thought to affect their children, causing them to be born blind (see John 9:1–2). The ancients knew that some diseases could leave a sufferer with damaged vision or blindness (see Leviticus 26:16). Such outcomes we now know may result from diseases like malaria or measles. In other cases, blindness might be the result of injury or could be progressive with age (such as cataracts or macular degeneration; the last line of Ecclesiastes 12:3 uses figurative language to describe failing eyesight).

In all cases, blindness was economically and socially debilitating. For example, blind men could not serve as priests (Leviticus 21:16–18). Those afflicted with blindness had little opportunity for employment and were reduced to begging or depending on family support to survive. The Jewish law forbade taking advantage of the blind (Leviticus 19:14; see Deuteronomy 27:18), but no amount of legal protection could restore sight. The parable of the great supper includes blind people as among the most unfortunate (Luke 14:21; see also 14:13).

Blindness and sight in a spiritual sense are important themes in the book of Mark. When questioned on the meaning of the sower parable (Mark 4:1–20), Jesus revealed that there would be people who saw what Jesus did but would not understand the good news He brought (4:12). Later, when Jesus was in a boat with the Twelve, He chastised them for their failure to understand His person and mission, saying, “Having eyes, see ye not?” (8:18, 21). Mark, the author, left the question open-ended so that his readers might answer it too. In essence Mark asks: “Have you read about Jesus this far and still don’t see who He is or understand the spiritual lessons He is teaching?”

LESSON COMMENTARY

10:46–49. In Jericho **Bartimaeus** sat beside the road asking for alms. When he learned Jesus was passing by, he cried out, **Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!** Jesus did not object to this Messianic title. Many rebuked Bartimaeus, **telling him to be quiet.** He paid no attention, but continued crying out for mercy using the title Son of David. Jesus commanded him to come forward.

10:50–52. Casting aside his cloak, which may have held his collected alms, he **jumped up** approaching Jesus. He asked Bartimaeus what he wanted of Him. He called Jesus **Rabboni**, “My Master” (cf. Jn 20:16), and asked for his sight. This was not unreasonable. The Messiah would give sight to the blind (cf. Is 61:1). Jesus said, **Go; your faith has made you well.** As with the woman with the hemorrhage (cf. 5:34) and others, faith produced healing and a changed spiritual condition. Bartimaeus was restored and **began following** Jesus, unlike the rich young man (cf. 10:22). He may have followed Him to Jerusalem where he would have given an offering for his healing.

LESSON NUGGET – Bartimaeus, although blind, saw by faith what the crowds did not see – that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah. The journey of discipleship is characterized by blindness and sight. God is patient with sinners in their blindness but is eager to give them sight.

Sources: *Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary, The Jeremiah Study Bible and Wiersbe Expository Outlines on the New Testament*