

Sermon Outline

The Blind and the Blinded.

Text : Mark 10:46-52

Message: Because Jesus is calling all sinners to Himself, we should connect the blind and blinded to Christ at every opportunity.

I Introduction

II We should connect others to Christ at every opportunity

A. Context

1. Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem via Jericho on the final leg of his mission.
2. During his journey, he taught the disciples. First it was about facilitating and not hindering children from entering the kingdom of God. Then there was the encounter with the rich young man who was hindered from entering the kingdom because of his riches.

B. Setting

1. Jesus' disciples and a big crowd was following Jesus. There were also many beggars in Jericho city seeking alms.
2. Bartimaeus who was blind, was one of them. He was sitting by the roadside begging.
 - When blind Bartimaeus heard Jesus was passing by, he cried out to Jesus, calling him – Son of David or Messiah. But many in the crowd told him to shut up.
 - Jesus then stopped and called for Bartimaeus.
 - Bartimaeus threw off his beggar's cloak, jumped up and came to Jesus.
 - Bartimaeus requested that he might see.
 - Jesus asked him to go on his way for his faith in Him as Messiah had delivered him.
 - Having recovered his sight and delivered from his former life, Bartimaeus gave his new life to serving the Lord.
3. We will look first at the crowd's response to Bartimaeus and then on Bartimaeus 's encounter with Jesus.

C. Nature of the crowd.

1. The large crowd originated not necessarily from Jericho. Most would have witnessed and enjoyed Jesus' ministry especially those who had followed Him all the way from Galilee.
2. They would have heard and witnessed how he always welcome the marginalized including children.
3. He had mingled with and healed lepers, paralytics, the demon-possessed and the sick. He came to fulfill what the prophets have spoken about him (Isa 35:5-6) the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
4. In the few verses just before this incident, Jesus' disciples were jostling as to who is to sit at Jesus' right and left hand. He reminded that greatness was not about positions and authority but of humble service.

D. Response of the crowd to blind Bartimaeus.

1. But obviously the thrust of the message did not get through. The crowd perhaps including the disciples rebuked Bartimaeus and asked him to shut up when he called out to the Jesus for help.
2. Blind Bartimaeus, the beggar is a picture of hopelessness and helplessness.
 - Helpless, he is entirely dependent on his family, relatives and friends to provide for him. That did not necessarily work out esp when resources are scarce.
 - Hopeless, he cannot contribute in any meaningful way to improve his own condition or others.
3. Yet what was the crowd's response when the lonely and blind beggar cried out for help to Jesus. Shut up. But why such a response?
4. The people had simply been sucked into a crowd or movement mentality. To some it was about going together for the Passover. To others, it was their excitement about championing Jesus as their Leader and Messiah who is going to resurrect the Davidic Kingdom and Jewish State. Then there could be those who there out of the excitement of being in a movement.
5. The second thing was they ignored blind Bartimaeus.
6. The third possibility is their perception that if the rich young man who earlier went away from Jesus sad, what possibility did Bartimaeus have in getting Jesus' attention.

E. Response of Jesus.

1. Jesus stopped. He stood still. The entire procession stopped. He called for Bartimaeus.
2. Despite being just a week away from dying on the cross and his mind occupied with the events ahead, Jesus stopped to call the poor and blind Bartimaeus to Himself.

F. Our responsibility to the call of the gospel.

1. Dear ones, as the Lord's people we can also be following the crowd, perhaps even a Christian crowd, and still miss out on our calling as a disciple of Christ. We can be

blinded by our own self-absorbed agendas and forget the larger picture of our calling in this world as disciples of Christ

2. When we are all caught up in our march for success, whether it is personal or family, we can be robbed of this sensitivity to love others especially to those who are not like us.
3. But unless we stopped and give time to attend to their needs, we are asking them to be quiet. Time or people chemistry can be constraints.
4. Inviting people to your house or to church means you have to give up or disrupt your routines and schedules.
5. SMS, tweet and post by all means. Nothing beats fellowship with a human touch
6. I know we all are all stepping up to the beat of the march of everyday life. But we must remember our high calling as Christian disciples at the end of the day of self-denial and ministering to others for the glory of our Saviour and God. Others as to those outside but also those inside the church.
7. As John proclaimed in 1 John 1, our Christian life is a shared life with God but also with His people. He adds that fullness of joy is found in mutual fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ who share life with the triune God, by faith in Jesus Christ. Ministering to others strengthens our life with God with joy.

III We should connect ourselves with Christ at every opportunity.

A. Bartimaeus' faith

1. However though he was blind, Bartimaeus had spiritual knowledge of who Jesus was.
2. Bartimæus was blind, but not spiritually. He saw things which Annas and Caiaphas, the High priests and all learned Scribes and Pharisees, never saw at all. Jesus to him, was the Son of David—the Messiah of whom prophets had prophesied long ago.
3. He saw none of our Lord's mighty miracles of dead people raised with a word from Jesus, and lepers healed by a touch. But he had heard the report of our Lord's mighty works, and hearing he believed that Jesus was the promised Savior.
4. When he heard Jesus was passing by, he immediately jumped at the opportunity to meet Jesus.

B. Bartimaeus' request for mercy

1. Interestingly what he asked first was not his sight or his right to be healed. Bartimaeus knows that he is no position to demand anything. He is seeking for “mercy” or compassion by divine grace
2. That humble cry for mercy can only arise from faith in the Messiah. Only a cry of faith acknowledges humbly we have no right to Jesus.
3. Similarly we have no right to salvation. We only have the right to live a lost, wretched life and we have right to an eternity in Hell.

C. Bartimaeus' persistence

1. When the crowd asked him to shut up, Bartimaeus was undeterred. His persistence is evidence of his strong faith anchored in his knowledge and conviction of who Christ is.
2. True faith perseveres and holds fast to the promises of God.

D. Bartimaeus response to Jesus.

1. When Bartimaeus was told that Jesus asked for him, his response was swift. He threw off his cloak or outer garment, lest it hindered him from coming to Jesus.
2. The cloak was his identity as a blind and lonely beggar.
3. Bartimaeus jumped up and responded affirmatively when Jesus called him. There was no hesitation.
4. Now when Jesus asked what do you want me to do. Then and then only did he asked for his sight, not money. Should he not have asked for salvation or like the thief on the cross remember me when you come into your kingdom.
5. In the gospel records, as Lenski puts it, faith in Christ sometimes come after the miracle, at other times it was already present before the miracle. The present case was the latter.
6. It was not that Jesus did not know what was the need of Bartimaeus. But He wanted him to know, understand and mean what he really needed.

E. Bartimaeus was made whole through faith in Jesus.

1. Bartimaeus was given eyes to see. His faith in Christ has saved him. He followed and became a disciple of Jesus..

F. Your response to the call of the gospel.

1. The man out there, be it child, youth or elderly, in many ways is like poor and blind Bartimaeus.
2. He might be wired on social media and the like. Still, the false sense of intimacy created in the virtual world fails to satisfy people's real needs for knowing others and being known by others.
3. Nothing can ever replace the good old fashioned in-person conversations -- where we cannot hide behind our screens and devices -- in building truly meaningful rewarding and sustaining genuine (and often less than picture perfect) relationships.
4. We need to appreciate what social networks are, and what they are not.
5. Only a relationship with God and through Him to His people is able to deliver us from our emptiness and loneliness.
6. Many of you have heard the gospel more than once. The danger is we can become insensitive to the call of the gospel each time we do not answer the call. Gradually it becomes background noise.
7. But do you see your need of a Saviour in Christ. Do you see your sin is the cause of your blindness? That it separates you from meaningful relationships with God and people.
8. God did a work of grace in undeserving Bartimaeus. He will do if you come humbly confessing your sin and need.

9. For those of us who are Christians, beware. We too, can be blind in the course of our lives, perhaps blinded by self-absorption and worldly idols. We can learn that Jesus always has time for us in all the circumstances and trials of our lives. Because he is God-man, he understands all your woes and sorrows. He will not leave nor forsake us.

10. We all must take every opportunity to connect with Jesus by grace alone.