

Luke 18:35-43

Introduction: This is the first of two miracles in Jericho. This man stands in contrast to the rich ruler who was spiritually blind. Just before this miracle takes place the disciples argue about who will be the greatest in the kingdom (cf. Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45)

- 1) Luke sets the stage for a healing miracle—18:35-37
 - a) Destitute—18:35 ³⁵ *Now it happened as He approached (the new) Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting by the road begging.*
 - i) Mark's account of the story gives his name: Bartimaeus (cf. Mark 10:46)
 - ii) Jesus is now approximately 17-18 miles east of Jerusalem. He will climb over 3,000 feet in elevation. He will make His final stop in Bethany Friday night (for Sabbath). See this in John 11:55-12:8.
 - b) Unaware—18:36 ³⁶ *And when he heard (the noise of) a crowd passing by, he inquired what this might be. ³⁷ So they (either the bystanders or the traveling crowd) reported to him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.*
- 2) An interaction with Jesus based on faith—18:38-42
 - a) A desperate appeal to the Merciful Messiah—18:38-39
 - i) ³⁸ *And he shouted, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, show mercy to me!"*
 - Similar words to Luke 17:13
 - (1) ³⁹ *Then those who went in front (of the procession heading to Jerusalem) were reprimanding him that he should be quiet;*
 - (a) They assumed this blind man was unworthy of Jesus' time.
 - (2) Apparently motivated by their lack of faith. The blind man actually saw Jesus better than the rest of the crowd.
 - (3) Cf. Luke 7:22-23
 - (4) In other words, He saw Jesus as the fulfillment of God's covenant with David. (cf. 2nd Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89; Isa. 11:1-9; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 34:23-24)
 - (5) Luke has already highlighted this in 1:32, 69; 2:4, 11; 3:31
 - ii) *but **he** (emphatic) screamed even more, "Son of David, show mercy to me!"*
 - (1) This is not owed the blind man, for that would be justice. He asks for an undeserved demonstration of God's goodness and kindness.
 - (2) He did not allow the negative attitude and peer pressure of the crowd to stop him from calling out to Jesus. He is desperate for Jesus.
 - iii) God is a merciful God:
 - (1) Great mercy—Psalm 103:11; 108:4; 145:8
 - (2) Tender mercy—Psalm 103:4; 145:9
 - (3) Multitude of mercy—Psalm 51:1; 106:7
 - (4) Rich in mercy—Eph. 2:4
- b) Jesus' compassionate response—18:40-42

- i) The man's inability to come to Jesus on his own—18:40 ⁴⁰ *So Jesus stood still and ordered him to be brought to Him.*
 - (1) Jesus responds with authority
 - ii) Jesus helps the man clarify his request—18:40b-41
 - (1) Jesus asks a leading question—*And when he had approached, He asked him, ⁴¹ saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?"*
 - (a) Jesus is not seeking information, but is giving the man an opportunity to express saving faith.
 - (2) The man respectfully expresses his desire for things to be the way they once were—*And he said, "Lord, that I may see again."*
 - iii) Jesus shows mercy to the miserable—18:42 ⁴² *And Jesus said to him,*
 - (1) A command—*"See again;*
 - (a) A command the man was unable to obey on his own.
 - (b) This is one of the great miracles predicted in Isa. 35:5 in connection with the Kingdom.
 - (2) A public commendation of hope—*your faith has saved/rescued you."*
 - (a) Jesus uses this event to teach about the necessity of faith in Him.
- 3) The results of Jesus's display of mercy—18:43
 - a) The previous blind man—18:43a ⁴³ *And instantly he saw again, and began to follow Him, glorifying God.*
 - i) He received what he requested in faith, not because he deserved it, but because of God's grace.
 - ii) No one tells this man he needs to follow Jesus or to glorify God. He does so as the natural result of a converted heart. What a contrast to 9 of the 10 lepers in 17:11-19.
 - iii) The poor, begging blind man ends up with everything. The rich young man ended up with nothing.
 - b) The traveling crowd—18:43b *And all the people, when they saw it, they too gave praise to God.*
- 4) Points for us to remember
 - a) So who has access to God's blessing and saving power? The one who recognizes his need for God's mercy.
 - b) Who is rich before God? The one who follows Jesus by faith.
 - c) Jesus's work results in the glory and praise of the Father.
 - d) Spiritual sight is a matter of the heart, not the eyes. Christ will not remove the spiritual blindness from those who will not acknowledge their need and come to Him to have that need met. Christ helps those who recognize their need and turn to Him in faith for help.