

I Need a Change

A Sermon on Blind Bartimaeus and True Identity

Central Question:

What identity are you wearing, and are you ready to cast it off to receive what Jesus has for you?

I. THE TEXT & THE MAN

Key Scripture: Mark 10:46-52

"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."

Setting the Scene:

- Jesus is making His way toward Jerusalem
- He has already told His disciples His ministry time is coming to an end
- A great multitude surrounds Him as He passes through Jericho

Who Is Bartimaeus?

- His name carries deep meaning:
 - *Bar* = son of
 - *Timaeus* = honored, highly prized, valuable, blessed, rich
 - *Bartimaeus* = the unclean, contaminated, defiled, impure, polluted, profane
- A man born from blessing who has lost everything
- He sits on the side of the road as a beggar — his identity has been redefined by his condition

Key Insight: Something happened along the way. Most theologians believe Bartimaeus was not born blind — he lost his sight, and with it, his standing.

II. THE PROBLEM WITH CHANGE

Central Truth: Most people do not like change.

- We hold on to broken phones, worn-out shoes, and old vehicles rather than embrace something new
- Change is uncomfortable — but sometimes change is exactly what we need
- The message title itself was inspired on *Daylight Saving Time* — a day the whole world is forced to change their clocks

The Real Question:

Why do I have to be this way? Why can I not change?

- Some want to change but won't get up from where they sit
 - Some want to change but want to do it on their own terms
 - Some are looking to a government system or self-help to bring change
 - **Jesus says: I can change you. I can make you whole.**
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III. THE IDENTITY OF A BEGGAR

The Beggar's Coat — What It Really Meant:

Under Roman law, if you were blind or disabled, you could appear before the Roman court system and be issued an *official garment* — a beggar's coat.

- It was made of burlap or leather
- It was larger than ordinary clothing
- It was brightly colored and highly identifiable
- It was the government's way of saying: *this person has the right to beg*
- Beggars would lay it on the ground for people to place alms on it

The Coat Was Their Identity:

- It was their most prized possession
- It told everyone around them exactly who they were

- It was their source of income and survival
- From a block away, people knew — *that is a beggar*

Personal Reflection from the Pastor:

"Some of you have given your heart to God, but you have not taken off your coat."

- You are still being identified by what you used to be
 - You are still carrying your past into your present
 - You are still hanging around the same places, using the same language
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IV. CASTING OFF THE COAT — THE MOMENT OF FAITH

Key Scripture: Mark 10:49-50

"And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called... And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus."

What Bartimaeus Did:

1. He *heard* that Jesus was passing by
2. He *cried out* — louder when the crowd tried to silence him
3. He *cast away* his garment — his identity, his livelihood, his security
4. He *rose* and came to Jesus

What the Crowd Represents:

- Modern religion that wants to keep you quiet
- A system that doesn't want you to talk about the blood, the Holy Ghost, or real change
- A culture that wants the road to heaven to be broad and easy

The Crowd Tried to Silence Him — But He Cried Out the More:

"Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!"

- He recognized Jesus as the Messiah — the Son of David
- This was a declaration of faith, not just a desperate cry

- His boldness got Jesus' attention

What Jesus Asked:

"What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?"

He answered: "Lord, that I might receive my sight."

Key Insight: Casting away the coat was the act of faith. He didn't go to Jesus still wearing the beggar's garment. He left his old identity on the ground before he ever reached the Master.

V. WHO IS YOUR IDENTITY?

The Pastor's Personal Testimony:

- In high school, his identity was the athlete — fast, physical, passionate about football
- When he truly committed his life to Christ, he learned his identity was not in sports

What We Often Place Our Identity In:

- Sports or athletics
- Work ethic or career
- Drugs or alcohol
- Broken relationships
- How we look, what we drive, where we live
- What others think of us

The Truth:

"My identity is Christ."

- Not your children
- Not your spouse
- Not your job
- Not your past
- **Your identity is Christ**

VI. THE CALL TO CHANGE

A Picture of Surrender — The Swaddled Baby:

The pastor shares a story of holding his newborn grandson — the baby was fighting sleep, flailing, trying to look at everything around him. His daughter told him: *wrap him tight so he can't get his arms out, and he'll go to sleep*. Within two minutes — the baby was out.

"That's some of you. God is saying — just let me hold you tight. Let me pull you in close. And I will give you rest."

The Challenge:

- Stop fighting
- Stop looking at everything else
- Stop clinging to the coat that labels you
- Come to Jesus — and let Him give you a new identity

KEY TAKEAWAY

"I Need a Change" means:

- Recognizing that your current identity may not be God's identity for you
- Having the faith to cast off whatever has defined you — even if it feels like your only security
- Coming to Jesus openly, boldly, and expectantly
- Allowing Him to make you whole

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What "coat" are you still wearing that defines you by your past or your pain?
- In what area of your life have you been silenced by the crowd instead of crying out to Jesus?
- What would it look like for you to *cast away your garment* and come to Jesus today?

- Who do *you* say that Jesus is?
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Scripture References for Further Study:

Mark 10:46-52 | Matthew 16:13-17 | John 9:1-7 | Ecclesiastes 12:13 | 2 Corinthians 5:17 |
Romans 12:2 | Psalm 46:10