



Mark 10:46 - 11:11
What They Saw

Summary: Jesus is recognized by a blind man and celebrated by crowds, but rejected by the leaders of the Temple and the nation.

This morning, as we look into Scripture, we find the last healing miracle in Mark's gospel as Jesus restores the sight of a blind man begging on the side of the road.

There's some rich, deep, truth for us here as we learn about Jesus, who He is, what He has done, and what it means for us and then, we'll close our service with communion. It is my hope and prayer that your eyes will be open to see and your ears will be open to hear what God wants you to know today and that the Holy Spirit will minister to you and your needs right here, right now, whatever you're going through.

Let me set all of this up for you as we jump in. If you were here last week, you know that Jesus and His disciples are part of a large crowd of people walking to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, the largest holiday of the year and Jesus has a lot on His mind. He told the disciples that when they arrive, He will be betrayed, condemned, mocked, beaten, and crucified, and then three days later He will also rise from the dead. He's actually told them this three times over the last three chapters.

So, Jesus knows what He's walking into and it's coming up fast. They're about ten miles away when they come to the famous town of Jericho and suddenly some guys sitting on the side of the road start yelling at Jesus.

Mark 10:46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

The other gospel writers tell us Bartimaeus was one of at least two men who heard the noise of a crowd coming their way and asked what was going on, and someone told them Jesus was coming through. They have obviously heard about Him before and recognize there is something special about Him. So, Bartimaeus starts yelling trying to get Jesus' attention. Which brings me to our first point:

1. Jesus Hears The Hurting

And specifically, He hears Bartimaeus calling out for **mercy**. Yes, it's mercy that takes the form of healing his blindness, but the emphasis is on healing as an act of **mercy**.

Bartimaeus isn't seeking a transaction. He doesn't say, "Hey Jesus, I've saved up a couple of shekels and I'm glad to throw them Your way if You could use those fancy miracle powers of Yours to give me back my sight..." In fact, if you read through Scripture you discover no one ever tries to buy a miracle from Jesus. No one ever makes Him a cash offer.

Nor does Bartimaeus try to negotiate a contract with Jesus making some big promise like, "If You heal me, I'll do this or that for you." There's no bargaining involved at all, just a desperate request for mercy. Which, again, is fascinating to me – there is no model, no example, anywhere in Scripture of someone negotiating a deal with Jesus they'll do this for Him if He could just show up and do this one big favor for them.

Friends all of this meant to help us see - when you need something from Jesus, whatever it may be, what you really need is mercy. And the way you receive it, is to ask for it.

Which is not easy. It's not easy to humble ourselves and just ask for what we need without trying to add anything to it ourselves. But it gets easier when you recognize your own need and who Jesus really is.

Notice, Bartimaeus calls Jesus the [Son of David](#) which is an interesting thing to say.

You see technically, didn't have an earthly father, He was born to Mary when she was still a virgin. Her husband, the man who helped raise Jesus was Joseph. So, who is David? David was Israel's most beloved King. He defeated the nation's enemies, brought peace and prosperity, and emphasized the worship of God - practically at the Tabernacle and poetically through his many Psalms.

God also made a promise to David, recorded in 2 Samuel 7, that one day a son of David would come to rescue and restore the nation in their time of need. Over the years, the prophets and the people had waited for the day when this [Son of David](#) would come and solve whatever problem they faced.

Today, many people put their hope in the next election and the politician that will make things better. Or we look to sports and we put our hope in the draft pick or the transfer window when our favorite team will finally get the star player we need to make a run for the playoffs. Or at work, we look forward to this new hire we want to make, someone we can hang all our hope on - when he or she comes, that's when everything will finally get straightened out and turned around. Well, that's the kind of hope the Jewish people had for the [Son of David](#), only magnified even more.

And now, some people are starting to realize, He's actually here. When the angel announces Jesus' birth to Joseph, he says:

[Matt 1:20](#) ... "Joseph, [son of David](#), do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."

Both Joseph and Mary could trace their ancestry back to King David meaning Jesus is, physically and genealogically, the Son of David – He’s got the credentials to lay claim to the throne.

But Jesus is also a [Son of David](#) figuratively. For example,

- David was a shepherd who famously became king.
- Jesus is a king who describes Himself as a shepherd – He refers to those of us who love Him as His flock.
- David saved the people of Israel from the enemies that surrounded them physically.
- Jesus delivers us from the things that want to destroy us spiritually.

So, for Bartimaeus to call Jesus the [Son of David](#) is a big deal. He’s saying – “You’re the One we’ve been waiting for. You’re the One who will save our nation. You’re our next king! And I’m asking you for [mercy](#).”

But notice how people respond when Bartimaeus starts calling out - they try to shut him up.

[48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”](#)

Think about this: a blind man is begging for mercy and people tell him to shut up.

Now, why would people do that? The Bible doesn’t tell us, so we can’t be sure, but these people all know what Jesus said will happen next – they know conflict is coming in Jerusalem, and the men closest to Him were just rebuked for campaigning for privileges and positions. So, they might feel like things are still a little tense. It could be like, “Now is not the time buddy. Jesus has important things to think about, let’s give Him some space.”

Let me ask: who, or what, tells you to be quiet and stop making such a scene about Jesus? Is it other people? Do you ever feel discouraged from reaching out to God with your need or from calling out His name and giving Him praise? Is it a voice inside your own head coming up with reasons why this isn’t time, or it really isn’t necessary, or I don’t want to really bother God with something like this, or what will other people say?

Friends, the list of reasons not to come to God can grow as long as you let it.

Bartimaeus had all the reasons we do to just be quiet and let things go, but he didn’t. He wasn’t discouraged, in fact, he shouted out even louder, [“Son of David, have mercy on me!”](#)

[49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.”](#)
[50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.](#)

51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"
The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."
52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

Now, think about this in context. Jesus shows Bartimaeus compassion *even though His own death is just days away*. He knows He is walking into direct conflict and controversy with the religious and political leaders of the nation and of Rome, but He still takes time to stop and show **mercy** to a blind beggar on the side of the road.

In the same way, in just a few days, He'll be hanging from the cross and *while His body is breaking down and dying* His priorities will be to seek God's forgiveness of those who have done this to Him, to show mercy to a thief on the cross next to Him, and to make arrangements with John to take care of His mom.

The point is: Jesus is always thinking about others, and He is always willing to hear your needs and show you compassion and mercy. He never has a bad day, never gets overwhelmed. He is always in control, and always available to you. Jesus has this amazing ability to see both the little people and the big picture all at once – you can do that when you're God.

So notice, after healing Bartimaeus, it's right back to His main mission.

Mark 11:1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; 2 and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring *it*. 3 And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here."

2. Jesus knows what is needed

Those of you who were here last week will remember that one of our points was that God has a plan. Even when our life or the world in general seems to be falling apart, God actually has a plan and nothing and no one can interrupt or derail it. His will, will be done.

Well, Jesus knows that, and He knows what is needed for the plan, He even knows that it will be available miraculously and so, He sends His disciples out with specific instructions to get what is needed.

4 So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it. 5 But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?"
6 And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go. 7 Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it.

If you are a disciple of Jesus today, let's make a little point of application here – Jesus knew what was needed, so He gave His disciples something to do. Something that may have felt a little awkward in the moment.

Notice, Jesus gave the disciples detailed instructions about fetching the colt, and they had good reason to trust Him - I don't think He had ever led them astray before. But still, they had to choose to go out and do it, by faith. And no doubt, on the way there they felt a little bit of that apprehension like most of us normal human beings – is this going to work? What if it doesn't? You know, you could get killed for stealing someone's livestock. Are these people going to believe us? What is Jesus doing?

Friends, I want you to feel the tension these disciples felt. Because you're going to feel the same thing at times – God is going to give you something to do, and it may seem strange or require a lot faith. That doesn't mean it's wrong or that you're doing it wrong. Remember, **Jesus knew what needed to happen**, so He asked His people, His disciples to go and do it. He involved them in what He was doing. And He still does that today. It's not always easy, but you do get to see some pretty amazing things happen when you obey.

8 And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread *them* on the road.

9 Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

“Hosanna! [which literally means – God save us]
'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'

10 Blessed is the kingdom of our father David
That comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!”

Up until this point, whenever crowds of people tried to give Jesus power, or rally behind Him to make Him a King, He turned away from it and told them, “It's not my time.” Sometimes He would do a miracle and warn the recipient not to tell anyone what He had done because, He kept saying, “My time has not yet come.”

But now, it is His time and people are loudly, cheerfully, praising Jesus – they're full of hope, excitement and enthusiasm.

Luke tells us that while it was happening, people from the Pharisees, one of the Jewish religious denominations, told Jesus to have the people stop making such a scene. And that's kind of interesting, isn't it? Because, that means for the second time, on this short segment of the trip, one person or group of people has tried to call out to God or worship God, and another tried to shut them up.

But Jesus tells the Pharisees that if the people stop praising Him, the rocks on the ground would immediately begin to take their place, crying out in praise. This moment must occur. It may not be understood, it may not be appreciated, but it WILL happen.

You see, **Jesus knows what is needed** and He knows this moment is a fulfillment of prophecy. A little over 400 years before these events Zechariah, one of the last Old Testament prophets had written.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

According to some scholars not only did prophecy say the Messiah would come this way, it also said He would come at this time.

According to the book of Daniel, the angel Gabriel announced that God would send the Messiah after a very specific amount of time. He said

Daniel 9:25 “Know therefore and understand,
*That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks...*

These weeks are actually weeks of years – so it’s not seven days, it’s seven years. And according to Dr. Robert Anderson if you do the math on all of this you come to interesting results. He traces **the command to restore and build Jerusalem** to a decree signed by Artaxerxes giving Nehemiah permission to return to Jerusalem for this purpose along with a guarantee of safe passage and a promise to supply all the materials to rebuild the city and its walls.

According to archeological evidence, that decree was signed on March 14, 445 B.C.. So then, if you go forward seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, or 483 years, using the ancient Jewish calendar which had 360 instead of 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days, you come to this exact moment before the Passover when Jesus rides into Jerusalem as **Messiah the Prince** fulfilling both the prophecies of Daniel and Zechariah, and others as well.

Now, there is some debate about the calculations and conclusions here, but as John Walvoord, one of the most highly esteemed prophecy scholars of the 20th century has pointed out: no one has ever categorically proved Anderson’s work wrong. It’s pretty interesting stuff.

And whether Andersen is right or wrong about the precise timing down to the day, everyone agrees, Gabriel’s prophecy to Daniel continued with an ominous warning,

26 “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off

In other words, the Messiah would come, but something would interrupt His work. His ministry would be cut short. He would not fully establish His kingdom – and that is why we look to the Second Coming when Jesus will finally establish His kingdom on earth physically, not just spiritually. It's interesting stuff, and perhaps it's why Jesus was so insistent that these things had to happen this way.

Well, we've got one last point to make this morning

3. Jesus comes in peace

Riding on a donkey, in fulfillment of prophecy, He enters Jerusalem, just days before the Passover and He heads for the Temple.

11 And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

We call the events of this day Jesus' Triumphal Entry. But that term meant something specific to the Romans. The Roman Triumph was an impressive ceremony organized to celebrate the successful campaigns of remarkable military commanders.

A triumph was a big deal and it had to be approved by the Senate. When the time came, the general would wear a crown on his head and his best toga made of expensive purple cloth with golden embroidery. He would ride through the streets of Rome as part of a massive parade with his entire army. One historian describes it this way:

First came the captives... (and sometimes their families) usually walking in chains; some were destined for execution or further display. Their captured weapons, armour, gold, silver, statuary, and curious or exotic treasures were carted behind them, along with paintings [and other art] depicting significant places and episodes of the war.



Next in line, all on foot, came Rome's senators and magistrates, followed by the general's lictors in their red war-robos, their fasces wreathed in laurel, then the general in his four-horse chariot... His officers and elder sons rode horseback nearby. His unarmed soldiers followed in togas and laurel crowns, chanting ... and singing... Somewhere in the procession, two flawless white oxen [draped in garland and with

decorated horns] were led to Jupiter's temple for the sacrifice. All this was done to the accompaniment of music, clouds of incense, and the strewing of flowers.¹

So, a triumph is a major parade, through the capital city, where a conquering hero is celebrated and it ends with a sacrifice at the temple.

But compare a triumph for a Roman general to the Triumphal Entry of Jesus and you quickly see how different these approaches to power are. Jesus never commanded an earthly army. He never physically attacked, conquered, or killed anyone. Jesus didn't ride in a decorated chariot pulled by four white horses.



He sat on a pile of other people's clothes on the back of a young donkey. He headed through town to the Temple to make a sacrifice, only it wasn't two massive oxen, He was the sacrifice Himself. The one who was heralded as the Son of David, the rightful King of Israel, the promised Messiah, stepped down and became the lamb of God offered up in innocence for the guilt and sins of the world. It's a powerful picture of contrast, because Jesus came in peace.

So, what do we do with all this information we've learned this morning? Let's see if we can make some practical application for our modern lives.

First, we see that **Jesus hears the hurting**. So, if you have a need, like Bartimaeus, call out to Him. Invite Jesus into your situation. Ask for mercy. And even if other people or your own flesh try to tell you to be quiet, call out anyway. Tell Jesus what you need. We'll take time to do that in just a minute.

Second, since **Jesus knows what is needed**, are you willing to run an errand for Him if He asks? If God sends you to do something, will you trust Him?

Sometimes God asks you to do things that require faith and trust. Will you go? Will you do the thing God is calling you to do? The disciples did. God has a plan, and Jesus knows what is needed – are you willing to participate?

And finally – **Jesus comes in peace**. Friends, you need to know and remember that there is a difference between a Roman Triumph and the Triumphal Entry. Jesus is all powerful, but He is also gentle and lowly. He wants to help you and heal you, He does not want to crush

¹ Summary from H. S. Versnel, *Triumphus: An Inquiry Into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph*,. Pgs 94-95.

you or hurt you. You might be impressed by a Roman triumph, but you can come close to Triumphant Jesus.

In fact, that's what we celebrate this morning as we turn to communion. We're not here to celebrate the bloodshed of victory in foreign wars, we're here to celebrate Jesus shedding His own blood for us. Spiritually speaking, we're the rebels who need to be conquered, and instead of crushing us with an iron fist, Jesus reaches out to us in love. He takes our guilt, He takes our inadequacies, He takes all the ways we fail to be enough or to be good, and He makes sacrifice for us – He wipes out our debt and fills in our lack so that justice is shown and mercy is poured out.

So let's take a few minutes now to respond to what we've encountered this morning and prepare ourselves to receive communion.

- 1. Jesus hears the hurting**
- 2. Jesus knows what is needed**
- 3. Jesus comes in peace**

Communion
Apostle's Creed
Doxology



Sermon Application and Discussion Questions

Mark 10:46 – 11:11 What They Saw

Summary: Jesus is recognized by a blind man and celebrated by crowds, but rejected by the leaders of the Temple and the nation.

- If Jesus asked “What would you like Me to do for you” as he asked Bartimaeus, how would you respond? What do you need Jesus to do for you today?
- What does this blind beggar have in common with the rich, young, ruler who also came to Jesus? How do they differ?
- What is the significance of Bartimaeus calling out for mercy?
 - o How might the things you’re praying for also be categorized as mercy?
- No one in Scripture ever tries to buy, trade, or earn a miracle from Jesus. What do you learn from this?
- Who or what in your life tries to tell you not to worship or call out to Jesus?
- Jesus sent the disciples to go fetch a colt for Him. Has Jesus ever sent you on errand for Him? Was there any fear or doubt involved?
 - o Has God ever sent you to do something and given you the same kind of confirming details as He gave the disciples so you would know it was true? What happened?
- How did Jesus ride into your life? Like a king on a stallion establishing His kingdom? Like a conqueror forcing submission? Like a knight in shining armor coming to the rescue?
- Why would it be nice if Jesus did ride in like a Roman Triumph? What would He and we gain? What do we lose?
 - o What do we learn by Him riding in in peace instead?
 - o Read Revelation 19:11-21 – how is this picture of Jesus different?
 - o Why are both necessary? Why is it important that He comes on a donkey first?