

“Filtering everyday life through the word of God”

This semester we will spend time in the book of Mark. All the gospels, (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) give an account of Jesus. And, Mark’s is considered to be the earliest writing. Matthew, Luke, and John probably utilized Mark’s account as a source for their storytelling. Let’s do the same! Let’s filter Mark’s words through our everyday lives as we define our *own* stories.

READ MARK 10:47-52 (ESV).

- 1) Describe the scene here...where do you think this took place? What was the condition of this beggar? And why do you think those around him were irritated with him?

As strange as it sounds, back then, begging was considered an honorable profession for the handicapped and disabled. This income was not associated with shame. And, in reality, there were few alternatives, so begging was not looked upon with the same pity we have today. This blind man, (Bartimaeus; bar-tuh-may-us) was just earning his wages through an honest day’s work. But, that did not always prevent others from their constant annoyance of his daily routine.

- 2) Are you ever annoyed with your coach’s routine? Maybe you have lashed out at him just for going through the motions of earning his wages? What common irritants of the coaching profession bring us to aggravation?

Regardless of the contempt of others, this blind man moved past it revealing insight, perception, and an awareness of Jesus. First, he called him “The son of David.” We hear that term of endearment a lot in Scripture, a title referring to the Davidic Covenant.

READ LUKE 1: 32-33.

Mary heard this from the angel, Gabriele, when she found out she was pregnant. But...what does that covenant mean and why is it important?

Well, that was the promise God made with King David hundreds of generations earlier, telling him a future descendant, from his bloodline, would reign over God’s people...forever.

So, when this blind man called out to Jesus by *that* title, we pick up some clues about Bartimaeus’s spiritual awareness. Maybe he was raised Jewish and knew about the Davidic Covenant. Or, maybe he was just a curious Gentile whose blindness had sharpened his listening skills and softened his heart. Regardless, he possessed a developing faith and he believed Jesus could help!

- 3) When we understand the context of our blind man, it seems easier to relate to him. Maybe you were raised on God’s truths, or maybe you picked it up differently along the way, but regardless, have you ever labored day after day with an affliction that only Jesus could change?

Let’s continue to filter through the actions of Bartimaeus. A couple of things instantly jump out regarding his faith. First, he was persistent! And, secondly, HE DID NOT CARE WHAT OTHERS THOUGHT! He was concerned about one thing, and one thing only...getting the attention of Jesus, even though “many were telling him to be silent.”

READ MARK 10:48 AGAIN.

- 4) Ever been there? You knew God’s plan for your life to be true deep in your heart, but many were telling you otherwise. Was it difficult to ignore their input? Share your experience.

According to Scripture, this man was not at all embarrassed by the scoffers. “He cried out all the more!” And then, something unimaginable happened! While going through the ordinary motions of his day, things instantly turned **extraordinary**. Jesus stopped...and he said to the crowd, “Call him.” (Mark 10:48) Take a moment and picture this scene. Time stood still for this man who had lived out his days in darkness,

invisible and ignored by so many! Yet, that crowd who generally discouraged him was now the crowd that encouraged him! *“Take heart, get up, he’s calling to you.”*

5) Have you ever felt unseen...or completely blinded? As CW’s we are familiar with a blinding future. But, is there a specific example when you encountered a miraculous moment...you would say Jesus stopped and saw you.

Let’s take some time to process Bartimaeus’s response. *“Throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.”* Essentially, he discarded everything that would slow him down, a physical picture teaching a spiritual principle. We also must cast away the garment of self-sufficiency, strip away pride, and free ourselves from every weight that (like a burdensome, long garment) could easily hinder our steps to Jesus.

6) What hindrances keep you from following Jesus on a routine basis?

RE-READ MARK 10: 51-52.

It seems strange that Jesus asked, *“What would you have me to do for you?”* Hmmm, wasn’t that obvious to everyone there? Yet Jesus’s question was about much more than eyesight. Remember, begging was Bartimaeus’s profession, his way of life. Jesus wanted to know if he was ready to change all that. No longer could he stand on the street corner and ask for money. Following Jesus would come with a price tag.

7) For Bartimaeus to see, he would have to make some major changes. Has there ever been a major lifestyle change you had to implement as a follower of Jesus?

DO YOU FEEL INVISIBLE?

Persistently pursue Jesus.

ARE YOU ALONE?

Don’t worry about what others think.

DO YOU LONG FOR CHANGE?

Get rid of anything holding you back.

WILL YOU BELIEVE GOD?

Then search out what you really need.

DO YOU WANT GOD’S BLESSING?

Embrace the changes.