

Prayer help for Mk 10:46-52

This week I did wait to share some insights on the passage until you had some time to pray on it. Although it is the harder path, it is better to struggle at first without input from others. Ask the Holy Spirit, before you seek insight beyond your own. This helps to develop the “muscle” of spiritual reflection on the scriptures.

General Insights on the passage:

- The use of the name (in this case) Bartimaeus is unusual in a Gospel miracle. Scholars think Bartimaeus was a prominent and well-known disciple in the community Mark was writing for, and this was his actual conversion story.
- Besides the church believing this is a miracle that really occurred, we can more deeply see it as an illustration of how we are all cured from our spiritual blindness (original sin) and come to recognize Jesus as Lord and follow him “on the way”. “The Way” is the name that “Christianity had before it was called Christianity, which happened at Antioch we read in Acts of the Apostles. (Acts 11:26)
- Jesus is The Way and many follow; some are “disciples” and some are “the crowd” not yet fully sharing in His mission.
- Jesus asks His disciples to call Bartimaeus, he is training them to be fishers of people, to bring the blind/lost (spiritually) to Him.
- Jesus is recognized by Bartimaeus, and many as Jesus of Nazareth, and “Son of David” the promised prophet and messiah, but had to learn over time that He was Lord/God. In this way we all gain our sight, as we come to more deeply know Jesus over time. Our life transitions from “passing us by” as we sit at side of the road without clear purpose or direction, to following Jesus as Lord, the Way the Truth and the Life.

Some Questions to Help your Individual Prayer:

- Are there times in your life when you felt like a blind beggar at the side of the road? As you put yourself in Bartimaeus’s shoes are there feelings and thoughts that remind you of times in your life?
- How did you first hear of Jesus? Who told you? Has what you passively heard led to an active role in walking towards Jesus? Or is he still distant?

- Has there been a time when you called out to Jesus in a way similar to Bartimaeus? (perhaps in desperation, great want/desire, pain?) Did Jesus respond?
- Imagine how it must feel to be blind and encouraged to get up and walk through a crowd to go to Jesus? Is it similar to times when you had to walk by faith? Is there a similarity in walking by faith and walking blind?
- As you seek to encounter Jesus more deeply, or “See Him” more clearly, or “Hear Him” better, are there voices discouraging you from that? (Like some discouraged Bartimaeus as he called out to Jesus.) Who are they? Others? The world? How should you respond to those voices? (Does Bartimaeus’ response, to call out all the louder help encourage you?)
- As you seek to encounter Jesus more deeply, or “See Him” more clearly, or “Hear Him” better, are there things that are holding you back that you must let go of? (Like Bartimaeus had to take off his coat and leave it behind to get up and go to Jesus.) Perhaps comforts, material things, bad habits, attitudes, disordered values, etc.
- Bartimaeus’s faith transitioned from hearing about Jesus from others, to having an encounter with Jesus that changed him (restored sight, or something similar) and this change caused Him to leave behind his old life and embark on a new direction in life “following Jesus”. Do you feel you have done similarly? Who in this passage best represents where you are in your relationship to Jesus; Bartimaeus, or one in the crowd, or one of his disciples?
- As you put yourself in the shoes of those in the crowd discouraging Bartimaeus, are there some in life you are discouraging, or ignoring, or blind too, who might need help? How could you better see them and help them?
- As you put yourself in the shoes of the disciples, are there others you are trying to help see Jesus? How can you help them better?
- Reflect on what it might feel like to have Jesus stop everything; the crowd, his disciples, and stop His journey, to reach out to someone seemingly insignificant by the side of the road. What does that say about Jesus? What does that say about each human being? Put yourself in the place of Jesus, either others in your life you need to stop for?
- Do you desire to take the next step on your journey? It may feel like a step requiring great faith, like walking while blind. Tell Jesus your answer right now and ask Him to help you take that next step.