

I'M REASONABLY SURE,,, THAT IF WE STOP AND THINK ABOUT IT FOR A MOMENT,,, WE COULD THINK OF A SITUATION THAT'S CHANGED OUR LIVES ENTIRELY,,, OR AT LEAST,,, LEFT US,,, NOT THE SAME! FOR SOME OF US,,, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WHEN WE MET A FAMOUS PERSON,,, FOR OTHERS,,, PERHAPS OUR TIME IN THE MILITARY,,, AND YET FOR OTHERS,,, IT MIGHT BE A SPECIAL TIME IN OUR LIVES,,, LIKE THE BIRTH OF A CHILD,,, ATTENDING THE WEDDING OF A CLOSE RELATIVE OR FRIEND,,, OR SOME OTHER EXCEPTIONAL TIME,,, IN OUR LIVES.

THE POINT IS: *THINGS TAKE PLACE IN OUR LIVES,,, THAT CHANGE US,,, TO SOME DEGREE,,, EACH AND EVERY DAY.*

BUT BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, NOTHING CAN CHANGE AN INDIVIDUAL,,, **LIKE COMING FACE TO FACE WITH JESUS CHRIST!**

TODAY,,, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT HOW: *ONE PERSON,,, CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN A LIFE!*

BARTIMAEUS,,, WAS A MAN WHO TOOK STEPS TO CHANGE HIS LIFE! STEPS THAT WE TODAY,,, CAN USE,,, TO CHANGE OUR LIVES.

SO,,, WHO WAS BARTIMAEUS? HE WAS A BLIND BEGGAR,,, BLIND,,, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY!

SCRIPTURE SAYS,,, THAT AS THE CROWDS PASSED BY,,, BARTIMAEUS OVERHEARD THAT JESUS WAS AMONG THEM. *NOW,,, BARTIMAEUS KNEW OF JESUS,,, HIS TEACHINGS AND HIS MANY HEALING MIRACLES.*

SO,,, WHEN BARTIMEAUS HEARD THAT JESUS WAS ACTUALLY THERE,,, HOPE SPRANG UP,,, WITHIN HIM. SOMETHING CAME ALIVE,,, WITHIN THIS SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS OUTCAST,,, FROM THE JEWISH SOCIETY.

BARTIMAEUS BEGAN CRYING OUT REPEATEDLY; **JESUS,,, SON OF DAVID,,, HAVE PITY ON ME!**

ALTHOUGH HE WAS BLIND,,,HE RECEIVED AND PROCLAIMED JESUS,,, AS THE MESSIAH,,, EVEN BEFORE THE DISCIPLES DID,,, AND AT THAT VERY MOMENT,,, HIS LIFE BEGAN TO CHANGE FOREVER! THE CROWD TRIED HARD TO SHUT BARTIMAEUS UP AND TO KEEP HIM FROM CALLING OUT TO JESUS,,, JUST AS OUR WORLD TRIES HARD TO KEEP US,,, FROM JESUS TODAY!

BUT BARTIMAEUS WOULDN'T BE SILENCED,,, HE JUST WOULDN'T QUIT! THE MORE THEY TRIED TO SILENCE HIM,,, THE LOUDER HE CRIED;

JESUS,,, SON OF DAVID,,, HAVE PITY ON ME!

THERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT LESSONS,,, WE CAN LEARN FROM BARTIMAEUS AND HIS CONTACT WITH JESUS THAT DAY.

FIRST,,, IS HIS PERSISTANCE: WHEN JESUS REPEATEDLY HEARD BARTIMAEUS' VOICE,,, OVER THE NOISE OF THE CROWD,,, HE STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS. BARTIMAEUS WASN'T AFRAID,,, THAT HIS REQUEST WASN'T IMPORTANT ENOUGH,,, OR THAT THE OTHER SIGHTED PEOPLE WERE MORE IMPORTANT. ALL HE KNEW,,, WAS THAT HE COULD NOT ALLOW THIS MOMENT TO PASS BY HIM!

(LUKE 18.1) SAYS: WE ARE TO PRAY AND NOT GIVE UP! AND IN THE (BOOK OF JAMES),,,, IT SAYS:

YOU HAVE NOT,,, BECAUSE YOU ASK NOT!

JESUS SAID: ***ASK,,, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN TO YOU! SEEK,,, AND YOU WILL FIND! KNOCK,,, AND IT WILL BE OPENED! FOR EVERYONE WHO ASKS,,, RECEIVES,,, AND HE WHO SEEKS,,, FINDS AND TO HIM WHO KNOCKS,,, THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED.***

IN (MATTHEW 7: 7-8) SCRIPTURE ALSO SAYS; PRAY WITHOUT CEASING!

IN OTHER WORDS,,, DON'T JUST ASK ONCE,,, IN YOUR TIME OF NEED,,, BUT KEEP ON ASKING,,, SEEKING AND KNOCKING,,, AT THE THRONE OF GRACE,,, UNTIL YOUR ANSWER ARRIVES.

BARTIMAEUS,,, WITH ALL HIS HEART,,, FORCEFULLY AND PASSIONATELY,,, ,, CRIED OUT TO JESUS!

WHAT DOES THAT SAY TO US? IT SAYS:

IF WE,,, DO NOT SEEK THE LORD,,, WITH ALL OUR HEART,,, WE WILL NOT DRAW CLOSE TO HIM!

I BELIEVE,,, THAT YOU'LL AGREE WITH ME,,, WE LIVE; IN ***A BUSY,,, SELF-CENTERED WORLD TODAY!***

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, SINCE WE LIVE IN A WORLD WITH,,, COUNTLESS,,, DISTRACTIONS,,, TEMPTATIONS AND SO MUCH INDIFFERENCE,,, ***WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE PASSIVE OR INDIFFERENT ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS OUR SAVIOR,,,*** AND AT THE SAME TIME,,, THINK THAT WE ARE SEEKING A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

DOES BEING EXPOSED TO A SMALL "DOSAGE" OF GOD,,, ONCE A WEEK,,, DO IT FOR YOU? OR,,,

ARE YOU PASSIONATELY AND FORCEFULLY,,, SEEKING A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD,,, ALL WEEK LONG?

TOO OFTEN,,, PEOPLE THINK ***THAT THE OPPOSITE OF LOVE,,, IS HATE!*** BUT ACTUALLY,,, THE TRUTH IS,,, ***THAT THE OPPOSITE OF LOVE; IS INDIFFERENCE!***

IF YOU HAVE AN INDIFFERENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS JESUS,,, THEN,,, YOU HAVE A PROBLEM,,, BECAUSE,,, YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS AT A STANDSTILL!

YOU SEE BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, ***JESUS LOVES YOU "UNCONDITIONALLY"***,,, AND HE DESIRES,,, THAT HIS LOVE FOR YOU,,, WILL BE RETURNED TO HIM,,, WITH AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF LOVE AND DESIRE!

IN (MATTHEW 5: 6) JESUS SAID:

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS,,, FOR THEY WILL BE FILLED!

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A TRUE HUNGER FOR THE LORD,,, AND FOR HIS WORD,,, THEN HOW CAN YOU EXPECT TO BE FILLED WITH HIS PRESENCE AND HIS PEACE"

THE TRUTH IS: ***YOU CANNOT!***

BARTIMAEUS WAS PERSISTANT AND PASSIONATE ABOUT SEEKING JESUS THAT DAY,, IN SPITE OF HIS OBSTACLES,, HIS BLINDNESS AND THE CROWDS.

THE MINUTE THAT HE HEARD JESUS SAY: *CALL HIM!* HE THREW OFF HIS OUTER CLOAK,, *WHICH WAS PROBABLY THE ONLY THING THAT HE OWNED*,, HE JUMPED UP,, AND BEGAN RUNNING THROUGH THE CROWD,, TOWARDS JESUS' VOICE,, LEAVING EVERYTHING ELSE,, BEHIND.

WHEN HE ARRIVED BEFORE JESUS,, BARTIMAEUS HEARD HIM SAY:

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO FOR YOU?

WHAT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BARTIMAEUS?

HE WAS THERE. HE HAD THE ATTENTION OF JESUS! AND HE COULD HAVE ASKED JESUS FOR ANYTHING!

HE COULD HAVE ASKED FOR MONEY,, POWER,, OR ANY OTHER WORLDLY THING,, AS HE HAD DONE,, SO MANY TIMES BEFORE,, AS A BEGGAR.

BUT NO! BARTIMAEUS,, HAD DECIDED TO CAST OFF HIS OLD LIFE,, AND THE GARMENTS OF A BEGGAR. HE WAS SEEKING *THE TOUCH OF JESUS*,, WITH ALL THE FIBER OF HIS HUMAN BEING!

SO,, WHEN HE ANSWERED JESUS,, HE HAD ONE HEARTFELT GOAL IN MIND!

***I WANT TO SEE!* WITH THAT,, JESUS SAID:**

GO YOUR WAY,, YOUR FAITH HAS SAVED YOU!

BARTIMAEUS HAD AN IMMEDIATE CONVERSION OF HEART! HE HAD BECOME,, A NEW CREATION!

HIS EYES,, WERE NOT ONLY *PHYSICALLY* HEALED,, BUT THE "*BLINDNESS OF HIS HEART*",, WAS ALSO HEALED!

HE HAD NOW BEEN CLOTHED,, WITH *THE ROBES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS* AND HE HAD PEACE WITH GOD,, BECAUSE: *HIS FAITH HAD SAVED HIM!*

LIKE BARTIMAEUS,,, IF WE'RE PERSISTANT IN OUR PRAYERS,,, PASSIONATE IN OUR PRAYER LIFE,,, AND IN OUR PERSISTENT SEARCH,,, FOR AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS,,, THEN,,, THE SAME THING THAT HAPPEBED TO BARTIMAEUS,,, WILL HAPPEN TO US!

THE SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS AND INDIFFERENCE,,, OF OUR LIVES,,, WILL BE HEALED,,, AND GOD'S WORD,,, THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT,,, WILL GUIDE US.

(2 COR. 5: 17) SAYS: *IF ANY MAN,,, IS IN CHRIST,,, HE IS A NEW CREATION. OLD THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY AND BEHOLD,,, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW.*

THINGS CHANGED IN BARTIMAEOUS LIFE! AFTER HIS HEALING,,, HE IMMEDIATELY LEFT HIS BEGGARS LIFE AND FOLLOWED JESUS!

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, IF IN YOUR LIFE,,, JESUS HAS OPENED THE EYES OF YOUR HEART,,, TO SEE THE LIGHT OF HIS KINGDOM,,, AND TO KNOW HIS LOVE AND FORGIVENESS,,, THEN,,, YOU HAVE TRULY RECEIVED A GENUINE AND CORAGEOUS FAITH.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE GENUINE,,, CORAGEOUS FAITH,,, CAN'T WAIT,,, TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS AND TO POINT OTHERS TO HIM.

WHEN YOU DO THIS,,, YOU SIMPLY CAN'T HELP,,, BUT TO INFLUENCE THE SPIRITUALLY BLIND PEOPLE AROUND YOU,,, THOSE PEOPLE,,, WHO ARE SEEKING JESUS,,, JUST LIKE BARTIMAEUS DID.

WHEN YOUR WITH THEM,,, MAKE SURE TO TELL THEM WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR YOU,,, IN YOUR LIFE.

THEN,,, BRING THEM WITH YOU,,, TO ST BARNABAS,,, SO THAT THEY TOO,,, CAN FOLLOW JESUS,,, WITH OUR LOVING COMMUNITY. IN THAT WAY,,, WE CAN ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE,,, IN THEIR LIVES,,, JUST LIKE JESUS,,, HAS DONE,,, IN OUR LIVES.

THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

+++ AMEN+++

(1,282) WDS,,, 5 PGS

