

# Men As Trees, Walking

## **He cometh**

Let us notice the inclusion of the little introductory phrases in Mark's accounts of the travels of the Lord, 'And he cometh to Bethsaida'. It is a big mistake to think the important part of this phrase is the location. Rather the important part is that the Lord Jesus Christ came. He puts Himself in the path of the needy. He knows and goes to where His people are. Had not the Lord Jesus come to Bethsaida the poor blind man upon whom that day the Saviour's hand rested would have remained in his sorry state all his life. But Jesus came, He visited, and when He did He brought healing power with Him.

## **I will come to you**

Visits from the Lord Jesus are blessings to His people. The Saviour visited Abraham at Mamre, spoke with Jacob at Peniel, comforted Joseph in Potiphar's prison and met Moses in the backside of the desert. Throughout the Old Testament we have previews of Christ's incarnation by personal, physical and bodily visits with His covenant people. Then, in the fulness of time He came into the world to fulfil His Father's will and save His church and people. Later, as the Saviour anticipates His death, resurrection and return to heaven He assures His disciples of future visits yet to come saying 'I will come to you'. And He does!

## **Visit us, Lord Jesus**

The Saviour says in Revelation 3:20 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me'. What a delightful prospect for the child of God! This verse is misused by freewill preachers to bolster their false decisionism teaching when it is in fact a delightful gift to the church alone. Let us always be looking out, and listening, for visits from the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **A place of meeting**

One sure place to meet with the Saviour is under the preaching of the gospel in the fellowship of the saints. The Saviour says, 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them'. As the church meets for worship the Lord Jesus delights to come amongst His little ones to bless, comfort and encourage their hearts with truth, strength and increases of faith. We miss a blessing when we miss a meeting where Christ is lifted up.

## **They brought him to Jesus**

Another important detail from our passage is the involvement of the blind man's friends and family in bringing him to the Lord. Interestingly, he himself does not seem to have been seeking help. Are such instances not encouragements for us to bring those we love to the Lord, even if they have no personal motivation? Let us bring them in prayer before the throne of grace, which we can, and in person under the sound of His word, if we can.

## **The hand of the Healer**

The double application of the Lord's hands to the man's eyes in no way suggests lack of power or ability to heal. As always, we remember the Lord's disciples were His audience and their education His priority. Here the blind man is a picture of a sinner blinded by sin. Graciously and mercifully the Lord comes with power to heal and the Holy Spirit brings a call effectual to save. Yet, for the poor sinner the experience of grace may be more protracted as his opening heart, mind and understanding begins for the first time to comprehend spiritual light. By this simple incident the Lord taught his disciples not to expect uniformity in conversion, but a variety of experiences and degrees of illumination in different individuals.

## **'I see men as trees, walking'**

The blind man explained his initial perception of the opening light saying, 'I see men as trees, walking'. The figures around him were men indeed but indistinct, hazy and unclear. So it is with those coming to salvation. They know there is life, light and change of mind but how to explain what they feel in their soul and tell what they find in their own heart is difficult to do. New life is certainly present but growth in grace is progressive. Increasing knowledge of truth and deepening experience in spiritual matters is to be expected.

**Growing in grace**

Once again the holy scriptures correct the foolishness of those who teach salvation is a single religious experience and encourage their followers to pin their hope for eternal life to a calendar date when someone told them they were saved. Spiritual life is an emerging, growing relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It develops over time, puts down roots, matures, ripens, and in time bears fruit. But every stage carries a cost and battles are hard fought and won.

**If the Lord will ...**

For the disciples who had seen many demonstrations of Christ's divine power this stage by stage healing must have stood out from amongst the rest. It taught them, and teaches us, that in spiritual matters none of us have anything we have not received at the Lord's hand in the Lord's good timing.

Dear Lord, take the scales from our eyes and the veil from our heart and teach us thy way. 'For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.'

Amen