

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon September 13, 2020
Luke 18: 35 – 43 “The Blind Man’s Sight”

31 Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. 32 For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. 33 They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." 34 But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken. 35 Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. 36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. 37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. 38 And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, 41 saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." 42 Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." 43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

1 Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. 2 Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." 6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. 7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." 8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

I. Introduction

- a. Matthew Henry “Christ came not only to bring *light* to a *dark* world, and so to set before us the *objects* we are to have in view, but also to give *sight* to blind *souls*, and by healing the *organ* to enable them to view those objects. As a token of this, he cured many of their bodily blindness: we have now an account of one to whom he *gave sight* near Jericho.”¹
 - i. The One Who heals the blind eyes near Jericho stops not at the cornea or retina, tends not only to the lens and the lids, but rather dwells in all-seeing might over all things seen and unseen, and Whose arm extends beyond the seen eyes into the invisible blindness of the soul, bringing Light and Life, healing the mind’s eye, in the realm where none other can see or act.

¹ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1892). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- b. Luke 18: 35 – 43 “The Blind Man’s Sight”
 - i. Setting: Near Jericho v35
 - ii. A Certain Blind Man
 - iii. The multitude
 - iv. Jesus shows compassion
 - v. The Result
 - vi. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. Setting: Near Jericho v35
- a. “35 Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho,”
 - b. Jericho brings to mind the people of Israel under Joshua’s leadership, Rahab, the two Jewish spies, the miraculous crossing of the Jordan’s heaped up waters, Joshua’s encounter with the Commander of the Lord’s Hosts (pre-incarnate Son of God) and the walls falling down miraculously after marching around the city 7 days, horns blowing to mark the victory of God, followed by the total destruction of the city and its people. The people of Israel entered the promised land from east to west.
 - i. Hebrews 11:30,31 “30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. 31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.”
 - c. Also, the man in the parable of the Good Samaritan was travelling down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was robbed and beaten and left for dead. He was travelling the same road, opposite direction, that Jesus would take into Jerusalem. Jesus, like the people of Israel under Joshua, will travel from east to west, an approximately 3400 foot ascent over ~18 miles.
 - i. West → East, Mountain to valley: from home to exile, from Eden to wilderness
 - ii. East → West, valley to Mountain: returning home from wilderness exile
 - d. Also, Jericho was home to an astonishing palace of Herod, his winter dwelling. Jericho was blessed with an ever-flowing spring that set it apart as a good dwelling place in the midst of surrounding arid land.
 - e. It’s pleasant setting, filled with palms, gave it its name, mentioned in Deuteronomy 34, viewed by Moses from atop Mount Nebo.
- III. A Certain Blind Man v35
- a. “that a certain blind man”
 - i. Blindness, without family help, meant a life of begging. Begging was the profession of those with broken bodies who couldn’t do other work. Day after day, hoping to receive enough alms to survive.
 - ii. Henry “This poor blind man *sat by the wayside, begging*, v. 35. It seems, he was not only *blind*, but *poor*, had nothing to subsist on, nor any relations to maintain him; the fitter emblem of the world of mankind which Christ came to heal and save; they are therefore *wretched* and

miserable, for they are both poor and blind, Rev. 3:17. He sat begging, for he was blind, and could not work for his living."²

- b. A diligent beggar v35
 - i. "sat by the road begging."
 - ii. The poor, blind man was at his post this most important day. What temptations may have called him to stay home that day?
 - iii. Bock "Introduced as a poor beggar by the road, the blind man could not be more different than the rich ruler of 18:23. His blindness had made him totally destitute; his life was dependent on the mercy of others."³
- c. Observant and inquisitive v36
 - i. "36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant."
 - ii. Something different was happening this day. Instead of doleful apathy wallowing in the sadness of blindness, this man perks up and asks questions. He is curious and alive to his surroundings.
- d. Knowledgeable, Humble, Desperate, Bold and Believing v38
 - i. "38 And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!""
 - ii. After hearing the reply of the multitude: "So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by" – the man cries out directly to Jesus.
 - 1. Bock "The blind man knows something about Jesus, for his cry stands in contrast to the crowd's description of "Jesus of Nazareth." Ironically, this blind man sees, in contrast to the disciples' blindness"⁴
 - iii. Knowledgeable: "Son of David"
 - 1. The blind man is not misled by the Jesus of Nazareth description.
 - a. Bock "Jesus was a famous teacher, but it was unusual for someone significant to emerge from northern Israel."⁵
 - 2. The blind man had heard of Jesus and had come to understand Jesus as the promised Son of David.
 - a. B&C "The blind beggar in Jericho who was healed by Jesus (18:35–43) addresses Jesus as "Son of David" - the first public declaration that Jesus is the long-awaited Son of David—a royal messianic designation that alludes to 2 Sam. 7:12–16, a text in which Yahweh promises David a descendant whose throne would be established forever and who would be Yahweh's son ...The expectation of a healing miracle that would allow the blind man to regain his eyesight is derived from the expectation of the servant of God who would give sight to the blind (Isa. 61:1; note

² Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1892). Peabody: Hendrickson.

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1506). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁴ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1507). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁵ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1507). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

the link that Jesus establishes between Isa. 61:1 and his ministry of restoration and healing). The blind man evidently inferred from the reports about Jesus' miracle-working activity that he possessed divine authorization to wield divine power and that his mission could, or should, be understood in messianic terms—the mighty works of Jesus legitimate him as the Son of David, who does the work of Yahweh's servant"⁶

- iv. Humble: "have mercy on me"
 - 1. The blind man has no sense that he deserves to be healed. His own pitiful estate does not earn him any favors from Christ. He goes after mercy because he sees what he really deserves.
 - 2. Also, the blind man doesn't worry what others will think about him. He cries out: a loud voice, enough to overcome the noise of the crowd.
- v. Desperate: why would a blind man cry out like this? Because he knows his only hope of healing rests in Christ, the promised Messiah.
 - 1. Bock "The blind man knows that only Jesus can meet his need."⁷
- vi. Bold: Brokenness, knowledge, humility and desperation give rise to this bold, intrusive action of the blind man.
- vii. Believing: Finally, this blind man must have faith that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah Who has the power, the compassion and the will to heal him. Without this faith in Christ, all his other admirable qualities would still have left him quiet and confused as the crowd passed by.
 - 1. Calvin (Mt speaks of two blind men) "They confer on Christ no ordinary honour, when they request him to *have mercy*, and relieve them; for they must have been convinced that he had in his power the assistance or remedy which they needed. But their faith is still more clearly exhibited by their acknowledgment of him as Messiah, to whom we know that the Jews gave this designation, *Son of David*. They therefore apply to Christ, not only as some Prophet, but as that person whom God had promised to be the only Author of salvation. The *cry* proved the ardour of the desire; for, though they knew that what they said exposed them to the hatred of many, who were highly displeased with the honour done to Christ, their fear was overcome by the ardour of desire, so that they did not refrain, on this account, from raising their voice aloud."⁸

⁶ Pao, D. W., & Schnabel, E. J. (2007). [Luke](#). In *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament* (p. 353). Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, UK: Baker Academic; Apollos.

⁷ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1508). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁸ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 430–431). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- e. Persistent, Tenacious v39
 - i. “39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!””
 - 1. In spite of the crowd’s obstructions and warnings to be quiet, he ignores them. He will not let even this large crowd come between him and Jesus. His faith in Christ as merciful Messiah persists, and he goes on crying aloud. This blind man refuses to stop going after Jesus.
 - 2. Calvin “Perseverance is therefore necessary to overcome every difficulty, and the more numerous the obstacles are which Satan throws in the way, the more powerfully ought we to be excited to earnestness in prayer, as we see that the *blind men* redoubled their *cry*.”⁹
 - 3. Bock “Peer pressure is a decided failure here! ... The failure to respect public pressure shows how desperate this man is to be healed and how convinced he is that Jesus can help him.”¹⁰
- f. Obedient v40
 - i. “40 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near,”
 - ii. The blind man’s faith is demonstrated by his obedience. He comes to Christ when He calls him near. The man’s faith in Christ’s mercy does not waiver. Coming near to Christ is a fearful thing apart from His mercy.
- g. A Servant, Honest and Humble v41
 - i. “He asked him, 41 saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.””
 - ii. Servant of the Messiah
 - 1. “Lord” – the blind man acknowledges he is the servant of Christ
 - 2. Bock “The blind man addresses Jesus as κύριε (*kyrie*, Lord) to show respect to the Son of David.”¹¹
 - iii. Honest
 - 1. The blind man is direct, not holding back. He longs to be able to see. He longs to be freed from his physical blindness.
- h. A Grateful example v43
 - i. “And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.”
 - ii. Grateful
 - 1. Jesus heals the blind man, granting his request. The man’s gratitude overflows in obedience (“followed Him”) and worship (“glorifying God”)

⁹ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 431). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

¹⁰ Bock, D. L. (1996). [*Luke: 9:51–24:53*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1509). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

¹¹ Bock, D. L. (1996). [*Luke: 9:51–24:53*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1510). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- iii. Example
 - 1. His life becomes a source of worship for all the people. The blind man's faith and healing spur others to worship God.
- IV. The multitude v36
 - a. Large and loud v36
 - i. "36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant."
 - ii. This is a powerful crowd, very intimidating for anyone.
 - b. Answered blind beggar's question v37
 - i. "37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by."
 - ii. No evidence of compassion, and even the answer is minimal and misleading.
 - c. Haughty, condescending, impediment v39
 - i. "39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!""
 - 1. Similar to earlier when disciples would not let the little infants and children come near to Christ.
 - ii. Calvin "It is surprising that the disciples of Christ, who follow him through a sense of duty and of respect, should wish to drive wretched men from the favour of Christ, and, so far as lies in them, to prevent the exercise of his power. But it frequently happens that the greater part of those who profess the name of Christ, instead of inviting us to him, rather hinder or delay our approach. If Satan endeavoured to throw obstacles in the way of *two blind men*, by means of pious and simple persons, who were induced by some sentiments of religion to follow Christ, how much more will he succeed in accomplishing it by means of hypocrites and traitors, if we be not strictly on our guard."¹²
- V. Jesus shows compassion v40
 - a. RC Sproul "...once more Jesus acts in compassion. If Christ ever had a legitimate reason to ignore the entreaties of a needy person, it was at this point in his life. This event takes place just a few days before the crucifixion."¹³
 - b. Stands still and corrects multitude with His command v40
 - i. "40 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him."
 - ii. Contrary to the multitudes, Jesus stops and commands that the blind man be brought to him. Jesus makes it clear what they should have done in the first place.
 - iii. Henry "Christ encourages poor beggars, whom men frown upon, and invites them to come to him, and is ready to entertain them, and bid them welcome: *He commanded him to be brought to him*. Note, Christ has more tenderness and compassion for distressed supplicants than any

¹² Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 431). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

¹³ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [*A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke*](#) (p. 344). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

of his followers have. Though Christ was upon his journey, yet he stopped and *stood*, and *commanded him to be brought to him*. Those who had checked him must now lend him their hands to lead him to Christ.”¹⁴

c. The Question v41

- i. “And when he had come near, He asked him, 41 saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?””
- ii. Think of this. The Eternal Son of God, through Whom all things were made, by Whose Word all things are sustained, knowing all, asks this man this question. Why? Did Jesus need to know the answer? No? The blind man needed to search himself and give the honest answer.
 1. Henry “By spreading our case before God, with a particular representation of our wants and burdens, we teach ourselves to value the mercy we are in pursuit of; and it is necessary that we should, else we are not fit to receive it. This man poured out his soul before Christ, when he said, *Lord, that I may receive my sight*. Thus particular should we be in prayer, upon particular occasions.”¹⁵

d. Jesus Speaks Healing v42

- i. “42 Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.””
- ii. The Words of Jesus restore this man’s sight. When God speaks, His power and wisdom accomplish His will, every time, without fail.
- iii. Jesus encourages the man’s faith, holding it up as real faith for us all to consider. Without faith, real faith, that unites us to Christ, we cannot be healed by Him. He gives us faith that is ours, and by this union with Christ, and only by this union, do we receive all the blessings of salvation.
- iv. Calvin “...when Christ says, *thy faith hath saved thee*, the word *saved* is not limited to an outward *cure*, but includes also the *health* and *safety* of the soul; as if Christ had said, that by *faith* the blind man obtained that God was gracious to him, and granted his wish. And if it was in regard to *faith* that God bestowed his favour on the blind man, it follows that he was justified by *faith*.”¹⁶

VI. The Result

a. Immediate healing v43

- i. “43 And immediately he received his sight,”
- ii. No delay when God intends immediate change.

b. The once-blind man worships v43

¹⁴ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1892). Peabody: Hendrickson.

¹⁵ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1892). Peabody: Hendrickson.

¹⁶ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 432). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- i. “and followed Him, glorifying God.”
 - ii. Note how those touched by God via faith in Christ cannot help but overflow with gratitude, obedience and worship. This is the fruit of Christ dwelling in us.
 - c. All the people joined in v43
 - i. “And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.”
 - ii. Luke ends this section on a note so high it has echoes of the great promises of worldwide praise of God.
 - 1. Bock “While the parallels share the mention of the immediacy of the healing and of the blind man joining in discipleship, only Luke mentions the crowd’s and the blind man’s praise that accompanies the event, a note he loves to make.”¹⁷
 - iii. Psalm 22:26-31 “The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever! 27 All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the Lord, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. 28 For the kingdom is the Lord's, And He rules over the nations. 29 All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive. 30 A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, 31 They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.”
 - iv. Ps 86:8-10 “Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. 9 All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. 10 For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.”
 - v. Rev 15:3,4 “They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! 4 Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested.”
 - d. The faith of one blind man, looking to Jesus, seeing better than His disciples, leads to this great healing, this great praise amongst the people, fulfilling prophecies about the Messiah, and pointing us to His endless compassion, power and wisdom to save His people and bring His praise over the entire earth.
- VII. Questions to know, love and obey God

¹⁷ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 1511–1512). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.