

Mark 10:46-52
The Merciful Son of David

This morning we return to Mark's gospel as we are marching through and coming to the end of a particular moment in his ministry before he leads to, as you can tell in chapter 11, the triumphal entry. And as with any narrative that unfolds, any story that is told that you might read or watch on the screen, however it might play out, there's always several different characters. And the author or the one setting it into motion has their agenda with how they present the characters and how you can learn from these characters. And in Mark's gospel, we have seen different characters come to life, and we've been able to learn from each of them, most notably and most central is Jesus. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, who has time and time again not just done that which is supernatural and authoritative on behalf of His Father, but also modeled a life of what it looks like to live truly in the image of God if man were actually to live up to that calling that God gave Adam and Eve to represent Him being in His image. Jesus is that image in perfection, and we've seen that time and time again in how He's handled Himself in relationships and beyond.

On the other end of the spectrum, we've seen the religious leaders that have interacted with Jesus, the ones that were the heroes of the day for the people, but as Mark has shown us and as Jesus has shown us, they are in fact the enemies, the ones who have been great examples of what not to do. Alright? The bad examples for us as we've gone through this, and we've learned from them. We've learned what approach to not have, what heart is incorrect, and the wrong way to live. And once again, shifting back the other way and maybe sometimes falling in the middle is the disciples of Jesus, the ones who are following Him. At times, great examples, doing wonderful things that we can learn from, and other times, not so great - still having a hard time figuring out Jesus - still not sure how to respond - still doing things under the influence of the religious leadership.

But there's another group that has surfaced from time to time, and it's been these guest appearances that we've had of random people. Sometimes not even a name is given. They drop in for one scene, and then we don't see them again in the rest of Mark's gospel. Maybe we don't see them in the rest of the New Testament. We just know nothing else about them, and from

them, we have learned as well. We think of people like the leper or the paralytic or a gentile woman who is approaching Jesus, these different individuals that surface throughout Mark's gospel, and we've learned from them. They show up. They give a great example of faith from time to time. And that's exactly what we have this morning, another guest appearance. This time with a named individual, that is Bartimaeus, a guest appearance from Bartimaeus, and a beautiful picture for us of faith, true faith, that unfolds in our text.

So, let's wrap up this part of Jesus' ministry and read Mark 10:46-52; "And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me! And Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.' And throwing off his cloak he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' And the blind man said to him, 'Rabbi, let me recover my sight.' And Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your faith has made you well.' And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way." This morning in our passage, we see it broken down into two parts, but really throughout all of it, we will continue to highlight and see this faith, this true nature of what we can learn about saving faith and sanctifying faith, the faith of what it means to follow Christ.

So, to begin, we're going to look at verses 46-48. This is where we find the beggar's request, the beggar's request. The first half with more of an emphasis on the beggar, the second half of our passage more of an emphasis on Jesus. Nonetheless, highlighting faith all throughout as we'll see. To begin, in verse 46, this is where we find the introduction to this man, our guest appearance, our guest star for this morning's passage, introduced to us in verse 46, but even before that we have the scene set as often as it is in Mark's gospel or in any story as it unfolds. We read in verse 46; "And they came to Jericho." ... "And they came to Jericho." We recognize another shift has taken place, another scene change has happened before us. And if you recall, this is a part of what we're expecting. In this part of Mark's gospel, Jesus has already made it His point. He has set His face towards the south, towards Jerusalem. This is His ambition. This is where He's going.

And it's not just because that's where everyone else is going because of Passover and the festival that would draw people down to Jerusalem and the temple, but even more so for Jesus because of the significance that He would then take in His role as the Son of God offering Himself as the true Lamb like we even sang this morning.

So, this is the journey that we've been tracking as we've been looking through Mark. We've been seeing Him move away from Galilee and down south. And just as a reminder, why would they go to Jericho? If you can see just in this tiny fashion there on the map, Jericho being down south, no doubt, by Jerusalem but a little east of it. So, why? And this is because of the red line that we're tracking there. The journey was not as straightforward as you might hope or think because of Samaria. Because of the Samaritans and the hostility between Samaritans and Jews, this was the normal route to take. You had to dodge it. You had to go around it. So, this is what happened. They crossed over the Jordan River, and they went down to that region that is called Peraea and spent some time there ministering along the way. And there's been this kind of pilgrimage, this kind of group of people traveling together, not just Jesus and the twelve, but even more as there were other Jews living in Galilee who also needed to come down south to Jerusalem.

So, as they've made their way, they have come down, and they've come south enough to the Dead Sea, and it's at that point, they cross back over the Jordan River to start to make their way west and ascend up into Jerusalem, up into the hills. That's where Jerusalem is, so they had to start to go up in elevation. Well, the last stop before you got there was Jericho. The last stop was Jericho. Jericho's about fifteen miles give or take from Jerusalem, the last kind of major city and place that you would go. And if you've been to Israel, you've seen this. You've seen how this plays out. It's Jericho, and then it's barren until you get up into the hills into Jerusalem. And as far as I've said ascending, it's kind of a big deal because Jericho's probably the lowest point on the earth with eight hundred and forty-six feet below sea level. So, it's pretty low down there with the Dead Sea, but where's Jerusalem? It's two thousand four hundred feet above sea level. So, you have over a three thousand foot climb that you have to do in ascending up to Jerusalem; thus with this kind of final journey that they're making, Jericho is a necessary last stop, a necessary last moment before, as we're going to see in chapter 11, what comes next. They make their way finally to Jerusalem, and that is the triumphal entry of Jesus.

And this is where they are. They're in Jericho, and as our text goes on to say, "And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd..." Kind of further affirmation here of the occasion that's happening here. This isn't just Jesus and all of His fanatics, this is Jesus and, no doubt, His followers, but also, others that are simply just joining the group because their going down to Passover anyway. This large crowd there, then at this point, we're introduced to our guest star. Then we see not only do you have Jesus "...with his disciples and a great crowd..." but then "...Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside." We're introduced to Bartimaeus. He's a blind man, and we're not sure how he became blind or when this happened. He could've been born this way. It could've happened at some point in his life. We're not sure, but he's blind, and he naturally defaults to a life style of many people that are disabled in this time - they have to beg. There's not government that really provides much assistance of anything for them, and sometimes families weren't as supportive or even nonexistent. So, then if you don't have much of a family to help out, and you don't have any help from anyone else, then you resolve to this begging. It's relying on charitable donations, people to be kind to you. So, this blind man is also a beggar. It's necessarily what he's had to default to.

And we get his name, Bartimaeus. He's named Bartimaeus unlike the same account you find in Luke and in Matthew. They don't name him. They don't give him a name, but in Mark, he names him for us which is interesting. And you think, why? Why would Mark give us the name of this guy? Because there's been other points in Mark's gospel where he's introduced us to people and he doesn't tell us their name, so, it's not like he always tells us their name. This is unique and different. Why? Well, when you look at his name, it's Bartimaeus, and in Aramaic, it's literally Bar-son-of-Timaeus, and he goes on to explain that his name is Bartimaeus or "...the son of Timaeus..." quite literally. But still, why would Mark, writing this gospel for maybe believers in Rome, potentially a lot of gentile believers, why would he give this name? Well, more than likely, as can happen and probably does happen, we don't have all the facts of what happens after Jesus comes to the earth. We have the book of Acts, but there's so much more that happens, of course, in the early church besides what's recorded there in Acts. And so, it's very possible that Bartimaeus becomes a pretty prominent role in the early church. He assumes some role of maybe even leadership or authority after this event, after Christ's ministry comes to a

close when He ascends into heaven. It's possible that Bartimaeus maybe even goes to Rome at some point and has a ministry there. We're not sure. We can only speculate, but possibly that's why Mark gives this detail. So, as the audience is reading this, they're realizing, wow, this was Bartimaeus. This was him. He was in this place. He was directly involved with Jesus and affected by Him, and they get to see his example of faith as Mark will unfold it for us.

This is what we find. He's begging, and as you would expect, he's "...sitting by the roadside." ... "...sitting by the roadside." If you lived as a beggar, where would you go? You kind of want to find the high traffic areas. That's the most obvious place you would take, so identifying Jericho as a place to beg is probably a good idea because, as I've already mapped out for us, that's where everybody's going. It's not like some people are deciding just to cut through Samaria, and other people like the scenic route; to go around this is what everyone's doing. So, everyone's having to go through Jericho as the last stop before they get to Jerusalem for Passover. So, naturally, we actually find from other gospel accounts that Bartimaeus wasn't the only one with this idea. There's other blind people that are begging on the roadside as people are exiting Jericho to head up to Jerusalem, a very natural location as he's begging and hoping that people will be kind on their way to Passover.

In verse 47, we learn a little bit more though. We see what actually takes place, and the faith of this man comes out. We find in verse 47, the beggar interjects - the beggar interjects; "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'" He's there by the roadside with some other blind people begging, and clearly, there's more than just a small group walking by and making their way up to Jerusalem now. It's a great crowd, and a great commotion. So, naturally, him and possibly his friends are wondering what's happening? This seems a little larger than normal, and somehow, we don't know exactly how, somehow the world got to them, that "...Jesus of Nazareth..." was passing by. Maybe it was all the commotion, and they kind of caught someone and were able to say, what's happening? And someone actually answered them, or possibly, it just... (straight from the text) it's very possible he overheard someone say it, actually say, it's Jesus of Nazareth.

The crucial thing is to see what Bartimaeus does in response. He gets this information, just this little piece, this little piece of information that it's

Jesus passing by, and he launches into action. And it's probably like an understatement when you think about what he's doing here, this blind beggar sitting on the ground, and then all of a sudden "...he began to cry out..." Right? He's not trying to get someone to plea on his behalf, he just starts yelling. He cries out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" He starts yelling, and if you think about this, he cries out. That's obviously implying there's no hesitation here. He jumps right to it. He finds out this piece of information; it's Jesus! And he starts yelling. He doesn't have to think and go, umm, should I try and catch Him now? Nah, maybe I'll wait 'til I'm on the way to Jerusalem, and then I'll catch Him somewhere there. Maybe someone can guide me to Him. He launches into action. Jesus, really? And he starts yelling. Also, "...he began to cry out..." What else does that tell us? Not just that he didn't hesitate, but he's determined. He keeps going for it. He keeps yelling, and he keeps crying out. He doesn't just say it once; "...he began to cry out..." There's this determination coming from Bartimaeus, and then most notable is what he's actually saying.

He calls out to Jesus with a specific title. It's a title that we haven't even seen in the book of Mark yet; "Jesus, Son of David..." How interesting that he doesn't just repeat what he's already heard. He doesn't say, "...Jesus of Nazareth..." Jesus the Nazarene. Instead, "Jesus, Son of David..." I mean, if you think about it, if you wanted to pick the safest title for Jesus, if you're talking about Jesus with other people, and you want to be the most neutral as you can be, the most neutral position is to call Him "...Jesus of Nazareth..." because that doesn't imply anything. It doesn't imply that you're in support of Jesus, and it doesn't imply that you're against Him. You're just saying, hey, I'm talking about that guy Jesus that's from Nazareth. That's all. And that's just neutral ground because He's stirred the pot, no doubt, and people are starting to have opinions about Jesus. A lot of people actually hate Him, and then other people love Him. So, this neutral title would be Jesus of Nazareth. Well, that's not what Bartimaeus repeats. That's not what he starts to say. He says "Jesus, Son of David..." It's like he's already got his mind made up. Once he heard the word Jesus, the name, Jesus was nearby. His plan just starts to move forward. His yelling and his even decision of what he thinks about Jesus, he is not neutral, thinking Jesus is just a guy from Nazareth. He's not needing more information. He's clearly made up his mind. Jesus is the Messiah; that's what the "...Son of David..." means. It's just another title, clearly from the Old Testament, showing that this person is the Messiah. Jesus is the "...Son of David..." He is the Messiah. Bartimaeus

has made up his mind. He knows where he stands. He knows what he believes about Jesus. He's not wavering. He doesn't need more information. He's clear on it.

If you think about "...Son of David..." and if we were just to give a quick sampling of Old Testament promises in regard to what God told to David, we start to see where this title comes from and why it's being used here. 2 Samuel 7:12-13; "When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." An incredible promise from God to David that he can look forward to an offspring that will sit on his throne and have this dynasty forever - a beautiful covenant that God makes. We can see it in other places, but one other place we'll look at is Psalm 89:20-23; "I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him, so that my hand shall be established with him; my arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not outwit him; the wicked shall not humble him. I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him." This is God's commitment to David and his offspring. God's commitment to the throne and dynasty of David.

Now, Bartimaeus saying "Jesus, Son of David..." is making a huge leap here, not just calling Him Messiah, but he's actually identifying this specific Messianic term to Jesus that He is the One, that He is the One by which God has promised to David that this dynasty will continue forever. This is the Man. This is Him, and we have a blind beggar shouting it. How could he be so certain? It's a beautiful picture of faith. The information he had was clearly enough for him to come to this conclusion. Knowing what the Old Testament taught and then also hearing the reports of Jesus, he was able to piece it together. He was able to come to a conclusion. Jesus is not simply a nice guy. Jesus is not just a man of wisdom or a good teacher. He's not just even a miracle worker. He's clearly the Messiah. He has made up his mind about who Jesus is, and not only has that now explained why he begins to yell out, why he keeps yelling out, why he calls Jesus the "...Son of David..." but then, what he also says next, "...have mercy on me!" He asks for some action, for something to take place. He asks for mercy. He was not only convinced of Jesus' power and Messianic authority, but he's convinced that Jesus could actually do something about it. He could actually act. He could actually help this man's case.

This is what we also find out about the Messiah in the Old Testament, not just that He would be a victorious King, crushing the nations, ruling His dominion from Jerusalem, but also that He would have this ability to be kind, to help the outcast. In Isaiah 35:5, we have a reference here to this work of "...the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped..." Bartimaeus had put this together. He's put this together, that this is the Messiah, and what will the Messiah do? He will be able to help people like me. I've been in this position for a long time (potentially his whole life), but the Messiah will have no problems with that. He'll be able to fix it in a moment if He wants to.

Well, we just have had a huge display of faith, but if that wasn't enough, we get a little more in verse 48. This is where we find him continuing. The beggar insists. He insists despite any opposition that comes his way. He insists; "And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' " ... "...many rebuked him, telling him to be silent." You can imagine this blind beggar that's sitting on the roadside, and it becomes very clear as people are rebuking him, how does this society actually view him? How do they view the disabled? How do they view these types of people? They basically have no regard for them. They're annoyed at him. How dare you. Shut your mouth. Be quiet. You're annoying everybody. They're rebuking him. They're just rebuking him, and trying to silence him. Well, what does he do? Does that shut him down? Does he go, okay, fine, I'll shoot for another time, maybe it'll happen later? He cries out even louder. He keeps going. He's already been on it, and so, he cries out all the more, the same thing to Jesus, the "Son of David, have mercy on me!" This man's faith was so great that no one would be stopping him from securing Jesus' listening ear. He would get Jesus' attention. It doesn't matter what people think, or if they're annoyed. He knows who Jesus is unlike probably several people there in the crowd who are kind of along for the ride, still making up their mind, still not sure, probably even having more information because they can see, but still not coming to a conclusion. And yet, here's the blind beggar who's been very limited, and he has got it, dead on, yelling out, crying out to Jesus the one true Messiah.

You see, if you think about it here for a moment, if we kind of just zoom out for a moment and think about what the Bible says about faith, and we have this picture unfolding before us, but we have other teaching in Scripture as it

describes faith for us. There's two critical aspects of Biblical faith that we can see from other parts of Scripture, and both of those are very present here - think about Hebrews 11:6; "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." Did you catch those two things? If you have faith and you would draw near to God, you "...must believe [1.] that He exists and [2.] that he rewards those who seek him." When we come back for our passage and we realize that's exactly what he's doing. He knows exactly who Jesus is, and he believes in who He is, that He is God. He is the Messiah. He does exist, and that He is that One; there's not another one to come. He's not another one preparing the way. He is the One. He knows that. He believes that He exists, and what else? He believes that Jesus would exactly reward those who seek Him, and thus him crying out, "...have mercy on me!" Yelling out, insisting please hear my cry. Give ear to my call - a beautiful picture of faith.

And we have to take a step back and think where does this start to intersect our lives? How does this faith start to look like? We think about this picture here, we think about what the author of Hebrews has said, and we start to try and piece this together. Well, we know that for starters, there's no way you can have a relationship with God unless this starts to become true of you, unless this is the type of faith you display, unless you actually do believe that there is one God, and His Son Jesus is the Messiah, and that He does exist. I'm not talking about knowledge. I'm not talking about historical data. I'm not talking about facts. I'm not talking about awareness. I'm talking about belief, belief like Bartimaeus' conviction. You're convinced there's no other God, there's no other options. And you know what? You don't have to give me more information. I have all the information I need. This is the one true God. You believe He exists, but even more than that you must believe "...that he rewards those who seek him" with eternal life. And how is it that you seek Him? Not through your own good deeds, not through your own works, not through your knowledge, not through your possessions; God doesn't want any of that. But you seek Him on the basis of the righteousness of His own Son. You seek Him through Jesus, and then you can have a relationship, then you can be rewarded the ultimate reward of eternal life.

No doubt there are people that are still maybe even here today that have not entered into that relationship with God. Let me encourage you. This blind beggar had all he needed to draw near to God and believe in Him alone and

have that access and that wonderful reward of eternal life through His Son Jesus. Don't wait for more. You don't need more. You have all that you need right here in what has been revealed. How about for people that have made that commitment and feel like you are in relationship with God? Is it not true that at times that relationship feels stronger than other times? Is it not true that sometimes we draw near, and sometimes we pull back? The reality is once we have that relationship, we must continue to cultivate and grow it. We must continue to draw near and be in His presence. We must continue in this process of sanctification, growth, becoming holy, looking more like Jesus. Now, how do we do that? It's the same faith, the same faith. You continue to recognize who God is. You continue to believe what is true about God.

From what we study and see in Scripture over and over again, you don't get saved and then treat God as a consultant. He's not your kind of go-to guy for finances or preparing your taxes. He's not your dental hygienist for a couple times a year. That's not God. When you're in relationship with Him, that's not the case. You continue to see truths about Him, and you embrace those truths - that He is a holy God, and because of that, you too must be holy - that He is a powerful God, and He can through you actually overcome any sin that presents itself - that He's a merciful God, and He understands exactly what you're going through because He's lived on this earth - that He's a gracious God, and no matter how many times you fail, He will continue to make Himself available to you as a loving Father - that He is a faithful God, and His resources will continue to be at your disposal as you live each day - that He is your helper, I mean, He sent you His own presence, the Holy Spirit, inside of you to help you overcome whatever the day brings. He is your keeper. He is your security. He has guaranteed that the work He began in you He will not give up or abandon. He will bring it to completion. As a Christian, you must believe that that is true of God. You must have faith in that, God is who He says He is in all of His attributes in all of His ways.

And then it goes beyond that. You must believe that God's promises will actually come true, that He actually does reward those who seek Him, and every effort that you take, no matter what time of the day, no matter how hard it might be, no matter how small it might be, is rewarded by God. His promises are good. They have been tried over and over again, and He comes out every time as faithful, that in seeking Him no matter what sacrifice it

might bring to you, you will have contentment. You will have peace. You will be fully satisfied, not needing anything else. You'll have joy exuding out of you, and the strength will continue to pile up no matter what hardships or sins you face. This is what it talks about when we're saying faith is not just something that you enter into life, enter into being born again, but it's something by which you continue to be sanctified. You continue to believe that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him, and you believe that every single day. You don't get past that. You continue to practice that. Bartimaeus just here as our guest star is a beautiful picture of that.

We continue to see his faith in the rest of the passage in a more minor way as we see the Messiah's response in verses 49-52 - the Messiah's response in verses 49-52. Of course, Bartimaeus' tactics work, and he actually does secure the ear of Jesus and gets his attention. In verses 49-50, we see the summons - the summons; "And Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.' And throwing off his cloak he sprang up and came to Jesus." Bartimaeus' efforts worked. Jesus must have been far away because He Himself couldn't interact with Bartimaeus immediately. He's off in the distance now. He's some distance past Bartimaeus at this point with tons of people between the two of them, and He turns and says, "Call him." This is intriguing; "Call him." I want to interact with this man. So then, we have the crowd, the very people that were probably there rebuking Bartimaeus, switching sides real quick. Alright? They're there telling him to shut up, and then they hear Jesus saying, "Call him." And they go, oh, well, hey, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." Come on, right this way. "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you" as the crowd changes to help this man.

Look at the display of faith yet again from Bartimaeus in verse 50; "And throwing off his cloak he sprang up and came to Jesus." I'm telling you, he was ready for this moment. He was waiting for this moment to come. You think "...throwing off his cloak..." is an interesting detail. Why put that in there? Well, if you think about what a beggar's life was like and what kind of things they actually had in their possession, a cloak was a pretty valuable one because as they were actually begging, it was kind of the means by which people could make their donations. When they spread out their cloak for people to throw whatever finances they had onto the cloak, and as he had to endure whatever weather might come, he needed his cloak. He needed it as he tried to survive with what little he had. So, it's no small detail that he

throws off his cloak and springs up and runs to Jesus. You might think, hey! Take that with you buddy. You're going to need that. This is how you live. He doesn't give it a second thought. Really, it's kind of a parallel almost if you could think about how when Jesus called the fishermen, when He called some of His disciples who were fishing, and how they left the nets. They left the business, and they left the fishing industry they were involved with. And in the same way, this beggar leaves his cloak to run, to have this opportunity to interact with Jesus. There's no hesitation. It's true faith, no hesitation in following Jesus when it comes to true faith. You think of the rich, young ruler and how he had this hang-up, possessions, willing to give everything he has to Jesus and live for Jesus. And Jesus pinpoints possessions, and he says I can't do that. I can't give those up. The beggar, his cloak, all he has doesn't matter, gave it up to follow and to come to Jesus.

In verse 51, we see this set-up of faith. Jesus sets this whole thing up. In verse 51, "And Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' And the blind man said to him, 'Rabbi, let me recover my sight.'" To be honest, you look at Jesus' question and you kind of think, well, that's odd. Jesus now gets face to face with this blind beggar and He asks him of all questions, "What do you want me to do for you?" And you kind of think, you know, if there was a time for Jesus to exercise a little bit of His inner Sherlock Holmes, this might be a moment to recognize that the guy's blind, and he probably wants to see. But that's not what he does. He asks the question, the very obvious question and so we have to ask why? This is a set-up. As we've seen at other points in time, Jesus has the knowledge. He has the ability, and He will say things to reveal that He knows exactly what people have been talking about, and exactly what people have been thinking, and it shocks them, surprises them, catches them off-guard. But then, there's other times, like when the woman who is bleeding freely sneaks up in the crowd and touches Jesus, and He stops everyone and says "Who touched me?" And the question is, does Jesus really not know who touched Him, or is He using this as a moment, is He setting it up for everyone to see this woman's faith, for it to be on display for all? And it's the same thing here. It's a set up. Let Me just ask this man in front of everyone, "What do you want me to do for you?" and I want everyone to hear it. I want everyone to know what this man desires.

And he responds in the very logical sense; 'Rabbi, let me recover my sight. It's interesting to note he could've asked for money. Right? He could've

asked for lots of other things. Really, he could've embraced what he had, but no. As an obvious display of his faith, he asks for the impossible thing. Do what only you can do, what only God can do, and man could never do. He asks that his sight would be recovered, or the NASB says "regained." So, it's possible that this could mean he was seeing at one point, but this word is also used for other people that were born blind when they recovered their sight, so it's still a toss-up. We don't know his health records in history. Either way, it's clear that Bartimaeus has this faith continuing to be displayed, and Jesus has prompted it. He asks Jesus, the Son of David, to do what was truly impossible, and that's true faith. True faith is asking God to do and trusting yourself to God to do what man cannot do.

Of course, Jesus responds in verse 52, and we have the sight - the sight that comes to this man; "And Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your faith has made you well.' And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way." Jesus reveals this request has been granted to you, but why? Because of your faith. If it wasn't already really obvious by the way he was yelling out over and over again, calling Jesus the Son of David, if that wasn't already obvious in his plea for mercy, and if it wasn't already obvious in Jesus saying, "What do you want me to do for you?" and him saying I want to see, if that wasn't all obvious, Jesus then makes this very clear; "...your faith has made you well." Let the whole crowd who might still be on the fence in some regard see this faith of Bartimaeus, true faith. "And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way." Beautiful! He can start to see, and you think, perfect. Now, he can go travel and go see the different regions of Israel. He can go to Galilee. He can go to the Mediterranean, go check it out, go see some sight. No. He gets right in line. He joins. He doesn't have other things that he wants to do first. He's right where he needs to be. He's right where he wants to be with Jesus, following Him - this other aspect of true faith that continues to show, this genuine faith that results in an actual commitment to follow Jesus and to do so immediately.

It's a most privileged position that we're in to see this guest appearance of Bartimaeus. We know that we've been called to have faith, and often times, we struggle. What does that look like? What does that actually require? What does that demand of me? And in Bartimaeus, we get a perfect picture, no hesitation, but determination to draw near to God, to believe God is who He says He is and to believe that God will in fact reward those who seek

Him. That must be our expression of faith, not just to have a relationship with Him and to be born again, but to live a life of holiness and sanctification that looks like Christ.