

(Luke) 45 - Bartimaeus

by Ed Miller

Jesus teaches that salvation is a mighty miracle of God, requiring total surrender and dedication to Him, and that we need God's illumination to understand the truth.

Duration: 51:43

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:7-8, Luke 17:11-19, Luke 18:1-14, Luke 18:18-30, Luke 18:35-43

Topics: "Bartimaeus"

Description

In this sermon, the main message is that Jesus gives illumination to those who cry out for Him and seek His guidance. The speaker reflects on his own journey of moving from error to truth and emphasizes the importance of foundational truth in understanding the teachings of Jesus. The sermon focuses on the story of the rich young ruler and highlights the miraculous nature of God's salvation, which is not dependent on human efforts or possessions. The speaker also mentions the contagious effect of praising God and encourages listeners to seek eyesight from God, which will lead to rejoicing in the Lord and inspire others to do the same.

Transcript

I ask you to turn please to Luke chapter 18 is where we left off. We will meet next week and then I'll bring a calendar for the upcoming months next week. I didn't bring, I thought I'd have it ready today but I didn't get it ready so I'll bring that next week.

Are you going to be gone a lot? Not a lot but I have at least two conferences in the next couple of months so I'll be gone two weeks. I'll always be here. Well thank you.

But last morning I was here. I know that was bad. Yeah it's normal.

One right after the other. I think it was not easy for you guys. We just began.

Actually we haven't begun. We're beginning right now. We're in Luke chapter 18 and we continue our look at the Lord Jesus in this wonderful gospel.

In our discussion we ended up with the introducing the story of the rich young ruler. As far as the context is concerned our Lord Jesus has now come to the end of his teaching ministry as Luke records it and since chapter 1711 he's been summarizing all that he has been teaching, the principles of the kingdom. We saw two great summaries so far.

He's been summarizing the great truth of salvation and we saw that he gives his salvation to those who come as little children. When we left off I was showing you from the story of the rich young ruler that God's salvation is a mighty miracle of grace. All through the story we see that he was taking salvation out of the hands of man.

Man likes to think he can do it himself and he's almost incurable in his desire to want to do but God takes it out of his hands. The rich young ruler came and said what can I do to inherit eternal life and the reality is you can't do anything and the reason is because God is so holy and goodness is absolute. He said what good thing can I do? Jesus said in effect he said are you sure you want an answer to that? Only one is good.

Only God is good. You ready to be good? Then you'd have to be as good as God is good. Uh what good thing must I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said there is no good thing.

Keep the commandments. He said well I've already done that. And then Jesus said then sell everything you have and give it to the poor.

And you remember how wealthy this man was. And so uh when it was all over his disciples asked the only question that could be asked. Chapter 18 26.

Who then can be saved? If it's so high and so impossible who can be saved? And last time we looked at his answer in verse 27. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. In other words anyone who gets saved rich or poor it's a mighty miracle of God.

And the illustration he used to drive that home was a camel passing through the eye of a needle. And it was a literal needle that's used here. He's talking about a needle.

And uh the largest animal in that area was a camel. And the smallest opening was the eye of a needle. Try to picture that in your mind's eye.

A camel going through the eye of a needle. Every time someone trusts in the Lord the camel passes through the eye of the needle. We're not quite finished with this story.

That's sort of a review. I want you to look again please at verse 22 to 24. This command Jesus gave.

When Jesus heard it. That is when he heard that this man wrongly thought he had kept the command. When he heard it he said to him one thing thou lackest yet sell all that thou has distributed to the poor and thou shall have treasure in heaven.

Come follow me. When he heard these things he became exceeding sorrowful for he was very rich. And Jesus seeing him said how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.

Now we've discussed already the seemingly strange way Jesus dealt with this man. I told you last week and I also prefaced it by saying I speak as a fool. But I told you last week that I thought it looked like Jesus blew a very precious opportunity.

I don't know how many times in your life someone's come up so pointedly and said tell me how to get to heaven. What do I do to get to heaven? And how did he turn alive? And Jesus gave strange answers. He said keep the commandments.

That's not the right answer. And then he said sell everything you have and give it away. He never said that to anybody else.

That seemed like a strange answer. And then the man walked away sorrowful because he was extremely rich and Jesus let him go. He didn't bring him back.

I think I would have tried to bring him back and try to explain what I meant if I had some cryptic meaning and so on. But we know better. We know our Lord Jesus did not blow any opportunity.

He didn't fail in evangelism. The reality is he was showing how impossible it is for man to save himself. Taking salvation out of the hands of man, making it a mighty miracle of God.

The man wanted to do something. And he said there's nothing you can do unless you're going to be as perfect as God. That was a problem all through the record.

In John 6 there's a place the disciples came. And in John chapter 6 in verse 28 they said what shall we do to work the works of God? Do you remember his answer when they asked that? What shall we do to work the works of God? And his answer is in verse 29. This is the work of God that you believe on him whom he has sent.

Faith is always our work. And to believe God and to trust in God. Anyway, verse 22, this strange command.

One thing you lack, sell everything you have, distribute it to the poor. Now we know the problem that we face if we take that absolutely literally. If we think that he really meant that.

Is selling everything you have and giving it away, is that a condition of salvation? Then we have to ask then who would be saved? Don't answer. Anybody here? Sell everything you have and give everything away? I don't think so, not literally. But I have an idea you already have done that in your heart, what he meant by that.

So let's look at that. Now we know it's not literal because he didn't require it of anyone else. And it's not a condition of salvation.

One of my favorite verses on that is Ananias and Sapphira. Remember that story in Acts? They were not judged. See they sold some land.

And then they came to the church and said, we have, we're giving you everything. And they weren't judged because they only gave half. The Bible says they were judged because they lied to the Holy Spirit.

They claimed they gave all. They didn't give all. They claimed they had a full surrender when they only had a partial surrender.

And here's what Acts 5.4 says. While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why have you decided to lie unto God? You've not lied unto men, but unto God. In other words, just the part here, before you sold it, it was yours.

God didn't require it. And after you sold it, it was still yours. You didn't have to give it away.

And God is saying, it's yours. I've given you, you're a steward of that. But when you claim that you've given it all to the Lord and you didn't really, they were judged for that.

One thing you lack, Jesus said. When I first read this, I thought the one thing he lacked was poverty. That's what it looks like.

One thing you lack, sell everything and you'll have treasures in heaven. It isn't that he lacked poverty. He lacked treasures in heaven.

His heart was attached in an unhealthy way to the things of this world. Verse 22, you'll have treasures in heaven. His tremendous wealth became a picture of this world and all that it offered.

And this man was certainly moved. He had a tender spot. He loved this material world.

Just assume for a moment that the man took Jesus literally. Jesus said, sell everything you have and give it to the poor. You got to remember the man's question.

What must I do to inherit eternal life? If it was literal, it's not. But if it was, this man was saying, what do I do to get eternal life? Jesus said, sell everything. The man said, it's not worth it.

He said, it wasn't worth eternal life to get rid of this treasure. And by that sentence, Jesus really put his finger on this man's heart. This man loved his things.

I'll do anything as long as it doesn't cost me. And especially that it doesn't cost me everything. How much, by the way, we say salvation.

Some people say that it's free. Well, it's not free because our Lord Jesus paid for it. So it's not free.

How much does it cost us? And the answer is nothing in the receiving. Everything in the outworking of that. Once you receive it, it costs you everything.

Because then you have dedicated everything unto the Lord. His conclusion was it wasn't worth it. I'd rather have these treasures.

I think the principle is clear. And that is, salvation is the mighty miracle of God. But I must come empty to receive it.

It's a spiritual truth. I must come empty to receive it. Selling all and giving it away is just a wonderful picture of total surrender.

Before we look at the kind of surrender this rich young ruler was called to, I'm going to ask you to look at verse 24 there. How hard is it for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God? Why does he pinpoint the wealthy there? And I think the answer is because there is a tendency. You've got to come helpless.

And when you have means, there's the temptation to say, why do I need God? I don't have a need. I can meet my own need. I can generate enough resources to take care of my problems.

And so it's harder for those who are attached to this world. But we're talking about heart attachment. I love to see the camel pass through the needle's eye.

I love to see God do his miracle, especially when someone trusts the Lord for the first time. That is such a life-giving experience to see that happen. But one of my favorite camels going through the needle's eye is to see a rich person trusting Jesus.

That is so beautiful. Someone has means, and yet at the end of the day, they bow their head and just say, Thank you, Lord. It's all from you.

And you're the one that's done a miracle of God when that happened. Glance, if you would, at verse 28. Peter said, Lo, we've left all and followed thee.

And he said unto him, Verily I say unto you, There's no man that's left house and wife and brethren and parents and children for the kingdom of God's sake, and then shall not be rewarded in this life and in the life to come. Why does God put that illustration there? And I think it's because it illustrates what is meant by selling everything and giving it away. You see, in verse 28, Peter said, We've done that.

We've left all. Now, you remember Matthew 4 and verse 20. Jesus came to Peter and said, Follow me.

He was mending his net. And the Bible says he left his net. And then the next verse said that he went to James and John.

And it said they left their boat. They left their father and followed the Lord. I hear you got an illustration of what it means to leave your nets, your boat and your father or your family.

In Luke chapter 5, they appear again and they're fishing. And so I say, Hey, wait a minute. You're supposed to leave your boat.

I thought you left your boat. I thought you left your net. I thought you left your family.

They left it in such a way that they still had it. What does that mean? After the resurrection of Christ, they still had their nets, their boats and their family. And yet the Bible says they left it and followed the Lord.

And I think it's a wonderful illustration of what it means to sell everything and give it away. It means to have it in such a way that it doesn't have you. And that you can leave your boat and still have your boat.

In fact, I really don't think that you really have anything that you haven't dedicated to the Lord. Take Abraham and Isaac. Say Abraham had Isaac for what, 18 years? And then God said, give him to me.

And then after he gave him to the Lord, the Lord gave him back to Abraham. And I'll bet you he had him better after he got him back than he had him before. I know I own Lillian now and my family since I dedicated them to the Lord.

When you give your family to the Lord, then you get your family. You don't really have anything that God hasn't given you. And the only way to have is to give it.

So let's say God has blessed you with treasure. You give them to the Lord. He gives them back to you.

You leave your boat but you still have your boat. You leave your net but you still have your net. That's why he said, if you don't hate your wife and family.

I said, what in the world is he talking about? Hate it. Hate my family. You haven't loved your family until you've hated them.

And that just simply means to dedicate them to the Lord. And then the Lord gives them back unto you. And so that's a great illustration, I think, of this kind of surrender.

Verse 29 and 30. He said, I say to you, there's no man that has left house and wife, brethren, parents, children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who will not receive many times as much in this time. Underscore that.

In this time and in the age to come, eternal life. I can see rewards in heaven. You dedicate yourself to the Lord and someday in the future, it'll be worth it all.

You'll look back. But it says in this time. Mark, in his presentation of this, makes it even more powerful.

He shall receive, Mark 10, 30. He shall receive a hundredfold now in this time. Houses, brethren, sisters, mothers and children and lands with persecution.

And in the world to come, eternal life. I'm sort of glad Mark dropped out wives. Matthew mentioned wives.

Because if you say you get a hundredfold wives, someone would have a problem with that. They'd take it literally and say, well, see, God's encouraging that kind of thing. The point is, what does it mean? I don't think he's promising as many teach this prosperity that if you give God \$10, he's going to give you a hundred, guaranteed.

You're going to get a hundredfold with everything you give. God's going to give you a hundredfold. Why does he say a hundredfold? Because the physical illustrates the spiritual.

And the prosperity God is promising is spiritual prosperity. I think quite literally on a spiritual level. This has been true of me.

I remember surrendering to the Lord in 1965. I came to know him in 1958, but then I got messed up really bad. And in 1965, I really came to the Lord and just surrendered everything to him.

My spiritual prosperity took off at that time when I laid it all down. The reality is now I've got houses. Well, I don't own a house.

I don't guess I'll ever own a house in this world. I got many houses. I can go almost anywhere in the world.

I've got sisters and brothers and family and land. And God has enriched me more than a hundredfold through allowing me to meet his dear children all over this world. And I think that's what he's talking about.

When you surrender something in such a way that you still have it, but you don't have it. You own it, but God has it. He has blessed you in every way.

And God certainly has done that. I am a multi-billionaire in Christ Jesus. And so are you.

So are you if you know the law. If there were no such thing as heaven, I speak as a fool again. I'd give up my nets and my boats and my family just for this life.

Just for the blessings, the experiences we've had as Christians, treasures in heaven. So if we come empty, in helpless dependence, going after heavenly treasure instead of earthly treasure, we're going to experience the miracle. The camel will pass through the needle's eye.

Now, the rich man walked away sad, even though he had all those treasures. And you can see why, because earthly treasures don't bring happiness. And that's why he walked away sad, because he didn't have heavenly treasure.

Now, there's a short transition before we come to Bartimaeus, the blind man. And it's an important transition. Glance at verse 31, please.

He took the twelve aside and said to them, Behold, we're going to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. He'll be handed over to the Gentiles. He'll be mocked and mistreated and spit upon.

After they've scourged him, they'll kill him. The third day he'll rise again. The disciples understood none of these things, and the meaning of the statement was hidden from them.

They did not comprehend the things that were said. We are just a little over a week before the cross when we come to the story here of Bartimaeus. What the Lord is doing here in verse 31, he said, Behold, we're going to Jerusalem.

We've been following the teaching mission of Christ, but bigger than his parables and bigger than his miracles is his direction. He's going to Jerusalem. All through the record, Luke sprinkled in that truth.

Luke 9.31, on the Mount of Transfiguration, remember Jesus was talking to Moses and Elijah, and they were talking about the death he would accomplish at Jerusalem. Luke 9.51, he was determined to go to Jerusalem. 13.22, and they proceeded toward Jerusalem.

17.11, he was on the way to Jerusalem. 18.11 right here, or rather 18.31, once again, they're going to Jerusalem. And so everything is focusing.

Let's get back to the big picture, and the big picture is his real ministry wasn't teaching and healing. His ministry is about to take place. He's going to the cross.

Now he pours it out here in the language so simple a child could understand. Here's what he told the disciples, I'm going to be delivered up to the Gentiles. I'm going to be mocked.

I'm going to be spit upon. I'm going to be scourged. I'm going to be killed.

I'm going to be raised on the third day. Anything they're puzzling, and yet look at the record. Chapter 18, verse 34, the disciples understood none of those things.

The meaning of this statement was hidden from them. They did not comprehend the things that were said. We're about to study the miracle of a blind man receiving sight.

And in the transition, he's showing these disciples with the clearest facts. How can you misunderstand that? They're going to hit me. They'll spit at me.

They'll scourge me. They'll kill me. And they said, we don't know what you're talking about.

We don't get it because it was hidden from them. And this great miracle, he's going to end with the miracle of eyesight. This is the final miracle that he did in his ministry.

And he leads up to it with this, that the disciples, no matter how clear the word, sometimes we say, I don't get it. I read the Bible. It doesn't make sense.

It seems so clear. And you'll never get it unless God shows you. Clear words are not clear words without illumination.

Remember poor Mary and Mark, their brother is sick. And they send a message, give us a clear word. And here's the word, this sickness is not unto death.

How clear can you get? And then he died. He doesn't give clear words until he illumines the clear words that he gives. And so this transition does two things.

It puts us back on the road to Jerusalem. And it sets us up, reminding us that we need God's light. If we're going to understand the clearest truths of God.

That brings us to the healing of the blind man, Bartimaeus. In contrast to the rich man who went away sad, this guy's going to go away happy. He was a beggar.

The rich man, of course, he's in contrast to that. And he's also in contrast to these disciples who can't understand the simplest statement. Verse 35, as Jesus was approaching Jericho, a blind man was sitting on the road begging.

Now hearing a crowd going by, he began to inquire what this was. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. He called out saying, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

Those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet. But he kept crying out all the more, son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stopped and commanded that he be brought to him.

And when he came near, he questioned him. What do you want me to do for you? And he said, Lord, I want to regain my sight. Jesus said to him, receive your sight.

Your faith has made you well. Immediately, he regained his sight and began following him, glorifying God. When all the people saw it, they gave praise to God.

Perhaps you're familiar with the technical difficulty of this passage. I see this story is recorded in Matthew 20, in Mark 10, and here in Luke 18. But there's some problem because one of the records, Luke says, he's coming into Jericho.

Mark says he's going out of Jericho. Well, what does that mean? How can both be true? I've read all of the different accounts and how they try to put it together. Some say it's not even the same story.

Because Matthew talks about two blind men, not one, being healed. And there are some little differences. Some say, well, he started crying when they entered Jericho.

He didn't get healed until they left. So if both are true, then there's a whole argument about New Jericho and Old Jericho. There were two Jerichos in those days.

The New Jericho, they were only a mile and a half apart. And so some say he was coming out of one and into the other. I don't know the answer.

I don't know if there were one blind man or two or if they're coming or going. Let me just say this in passing. I once read a book.

I won't name the author because I don't want to. Across the board, he's a good author. But he says some strange things and I don't want to turn you off to this author.

You probably know who he is. I'll give you a hint, though. He had a radio program.

Now I'll make you figure it out. Anyway, he wrote a book and he called Christians heretics if they believe that Jesus died on Friday. And the whole idea was he's trying to get three days and three nights.

As Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days. He said, if you start on Friday, you can't get three days and three nights. And so he's pushing this Wednesday crucifixion.

And he gives all the arguments of two Passovers that week and all that kind of thing. I don't know if you've ever studied that. The point is, maybe I'm being childish about this, but I don't care if he died on Monday.

He died for me. You can miss an awful lot of argument. Did he die on Wednesday? Did he die on Friday? The point is, Christ died for me.

And whether he healed one man or two coming or going doesn't really matter to me. The thing is, he healed this with a few differences. Bartimaeus, we call him Bartimaeus.

Only Mark mentions his name, that it's Bartimaeus. And actually, that's not really his name. You know, the word bar just meant son of.

And so bar Timaeus, the son of Timaeus. We actually have his father's name here, Timaeus. And he was the son of Timaeus.

Once again, we're a little more than a week from the crucifixion. And as far as the record goes, this is the last healing Jesus did as far as ministry is concerned. Now, you know, he healed the ear of the man in Gethsemane.

We'll get into that. Luke mentions that. But that wasn't part of his ministry.

That was something else. And we'll touch on that. So this miracle, we've not only got to study it in terms of Luke's gospel, but we've got to study it as the final miracle our Lord Jesus did as far as healing.

It's a climactic miracle. And it doesn't surprise me in the balance of scripture that he would end his ministry by giving a miracle of eyesight. Because that to me is the all-inclusive miracle.

It's the climax of everything. The gift of eyesight is the all-inclusive gift of God. And that is the key to his teaching and his miracle.

I figured it out last night. I mean, as far as adding the time together, I knew it before. I figured out since I came to know the Savior in 1958, I've known the Lord for 40 years.

That's a long time to know the Lord. And there's probably people here that have known the Lord for more than 40 years. When I first trusted the Lord 40 years ago, when you trusted the Lord, whenever that was, 50 or 60 years ago, what did God give you? And the answer is he did not give you a plan of salvation.

He did not give you a creed and a theology. In a sense, he didn't even give you a Bible. He gave you his Son.

He gave you himself. He gave you the Lord Jesus. When a person trusts in the Lord, he receives the Lord.

And since the Bible says Christ is all, when he gave you the Lord, he gave you everything. And I'm suggesting the Bible teaches, and for years I didn't get this. After I received the Lord, I thought, now I need other things.

And I started looking for gifts. And I started looking for blessings. And I started looking for experiences, visions, and dreams, and miracles, and healings, and all the rest.

God does not give his Son and then something else. Called power. He doesn't give his Son and something else called patience.

He doesn't give his Son and something else called love. He only gives his Son. So when I trusted the Lord 40 years ago, I got the Lord.

And since that day, he's never given me anything else. There's no second blessing or third blessing. Except one thing.

What is the only thing he will give you after you trust the Lord? And the answer is eyes. That's all he gives. The whole Christian life is made up of eyes to see what you already have.

He gives you Christ and then forever, he opens your eyes. Even in heaven. The fact that God is infinite, unlimited, you'll never come to the end.

Even heaven is progressive. And as ages roll on ages, we're going to see how wonderful and how beautiful Jesus is. There's no substitute for eyesight.

Cry out for him. Ask God. My favorite passage on this, Ephesians 1, 17-22, where Paul prays for the eyesight of the Christians that they might know the hope of the calling, his inheritance in the saints, the power we have toward God and so on.

Eyesight is what is illustrated here by blind Bartimaeus. Let me give a couple of observations. First of all, the great lesson of this story, the great message of this teaching, 35-43, can be summarized in these words.

Jesus gives illumination to those who cry for him. I think that's the main point here. He gives eyesight to those who seek it, to those who want it.

Whatever the passage teaches, those are the main things. Now, I guess I can get the facts before you by calling attention to three things in this story that make it rather difficult for me. I mean, me over against you.

It probably doesn't bother you, but it has bothered me because through the years, I've tried to become more foundational. I don't think too much that I've moved from error to truth. There's been some of that.

I had some look back and say, oh, that wasn't right. That was wrong. And I've moved from error to truth.

But mostly, I've noticed that I've moved from superstructural truth to foundational truth. It was true before, but it wasn't centered in Christ. So I'm moving more and more toward the foundation.

And there's three things in this passage that make me go, oh, I wish that wasn't there. It is there, and so I've got to deal with it. So let me mention those three things only because I feel like there's a more foundational truth than it looks like might be illustrated here.

For example, here's the first one. It looks like this passage teaches importunity. You familiar with that word, importunity? Pray it over and over.

The same thing. Use the same word and keep saying the same thing. It looks like it says that because in 38, he cried out, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

And evidently, Jesus didn't respond right away. And so he cried it again. And Luke 18:39, they tried to shut him up and they pressed him.

And they said, don't keep crying that for whatever reason. I'm not sure if they thought he was bothering Jesus or the blind man saw more than they saw because he used the messianic title. He called him son of David.

I think this blind man saw more than they did. They were saying, stop that blasphemy. Don't talk like that.

But anyway, the Greek word is he kept calling out over and over and over again. By the way, in this connection, I think we owe a great debt to opposition in our lives. Somebody tried to shut us up or hold us down or keep us back.

How that makes us cry out all the more. And I think someday we'll bless the Lord for all of the pressures that tried to shut us up. And actually have driven us to the Lord.

Years ago, I discovered that you don't have to say the same thing over and over again. All Christian groups in the regions of the country have different things. And I was in a section of Christians where they were big on praying through.

Have you ever heard that? Pray it through. And we had all night prayer meetings. And when I say all night, I mean, we prayed all night long.

And sometimes we would just say the same thing. You run out of stuff to say, you know. And I felt like I prayed myself in and out of faith so many times during the night.

I was believing God and then all of a sudden just repeating the same things over and over again. Is it wrong to repeat? You get this idea, you know, if my kids kept saying to me the same thing. All right, I hear you.

You're going to get yourself. How many times do you have to tell God the same thing? And I had the sense that the scripture didn't teach importunity. You don't have to say it over and over again.

But I think here's the common denominator truth. Repetition is not forbidden. Vain repetition is forbidden.

And I don't think this man had vain repetition when he said, Son of David, have mercy on me. His heart was in it. That wasn't a liturgy.

It became a liturgy. You ever go to church and they have that part of the liturgy, Lord, have mercy on me. That came from this.

But when he said it, it wasn't just a dry liturgy. His heart was in it. Lord, have mercy on me.

Son of David, have mercy on me. Son of David. Pray over and over again.

As long as you mean it. As long as it's real word. I fight this all the time with table grades.

I believe in table grades. I say table grades all the time. But sometimes I find myself just saying it, you know, just reciting the words.

And I always have to make a studied effort. So repetition is not wrong if it's not vain repetition. Ask God to deliver you from vain repetition.

The second thing, it's like that. It looks like this says, repeat yourself. But I don't think it says.

The second thing, it looks like it says, here you go, Michelle. Be specific rather than be general. Do you notice in verse 38, when the man first cried, he cried out for mercy.

How general can you get? Have mercy. And then Jesus called him in verse 41 and says, tell me what you want. In other words, it looks like it says, don't be general, be specific.

Now, the Lord Jesus is omniscient. And he certainly knew what this man needed and what this man wanted. But sometimes he just wants to hear you say it, even though he already knows.

It's because it looks like it's saying, don't be general, be specific. I think some of you are familiar with the fact that I am inclined to a different view on that. I am inclined to this view.

If I'm not sure I have preaching conviction on it, I share it with you. If you disagree with it, scrap it. That's all right.

But I personally think that a Christian should not ask for anything physical. And he should not be specific. He should be general in his prayer.

Some people don't hold that. I'm not arguing for my position, but I am trying to get to this truth of God. As far as the physical side, no question, that was specific.

He said, I want sight. That is specific. But take the spiritual principle.

It becomes general. I want sight. I pray for eyesight every day of my life.

I'm always asking God, but that's a general thing. If you're going to start off specific in your prayer, that's okay. It's always right to pray your heart, whatever God lays on your heart.

If you're going to start off specific and general, and you say, what do you mean by that? I will be done. Be as specific as you want, but then, and I don't mean this in any irreverent way, give God a loophole. You understand what I'm saying? God's glory.

And make sure that when you pray. I just like to pray, thy will be done. Father, glorify thy name.

Because I don't know God's will. I don't know how to pray. Someone said, will you pray for Grandma Teresa's bunion? I don't know how to pray for Grandma Teresa's bunion.

I don't know God's will concerning her bunion. What will I pray? Help Grandma to trust the grace of God and to see the Lord and to rely on his strength. I'll pray that kind of thing, but always in a general way.

So that's the second thing. It looks like it says repeat, and I'm not sure it does. It looks like it says be specific.

I'm not sure it does. And it also looks like he's putting more emphasis on faith than I would like to put on faith. In verse 42, your faith has made you well.

Someone could come to that passage and say, well, there you have it. Faith is something. I used to think faith was heaven's money.

If I had enough, I'd be rich. And if I had enough, I could buy from God's store. And I would come to God and say, here's my faith.

Where's my joy? Here's my faith. Where's my need? I just trade. It's money.

And it's a medium of exchange. And I thought faith was heaven's gold. And I went after faith as heaven's gold.

It's not. Guess what the coin of the kingdom is? It's in Isaiah 55. Ho, everyone that thirsts, come and buy without money, without pride.

Thirst is the coin of God's kingdom, not faith. And so faith is, I was nervous because I don't want people to have faith in their vain. The thing that makes faith important is who you're trusting.

And I read the record here. And there is no doubt this man did not have faith in his name. He had faith in the Lord.

Messiah, son of David, have mercy on me. You know, if you're a blind beggar and you hear a crowd, that just means more coins in your hat. I mean, that's what they did.

They played the crowd. And here comes a crowd. This guy wasn't concerned about the treasures of this world.

He wanted, he called out, and his faith was in the Lord himself. And so once again, those three things are importunity, specificity, and faith. I think the Bible, the full record of the Bible teaches no vain repetition.

Be general in the sense that you really want the will of God. And make sure that you don't have faith in your faith, but in Christ. When this was all over, and we'll close with this.

When this was all over, chapter 18, 43, this man is praising God. After he praised God, his praise became contagious. And did you notice, everybody else started praising God too, because he was praising God.

Now you ask God for eyesight, and that's going to set you rejoicing in the Lord. And when you rejoice in the Lord, everyone in your shadow is going to start rejoicing in the Lord, just because you're enjoying him. Now Matthew calls attention to, he puts all this in the plural.

Puts it all in the plural. In other words, there were two blind men, and they cried out, Lord have mercy on us. And he came to them and gave them eyesight.

In fact, Matthew says that he touched their eyes and so on. The point simply is this, I hope you've learned to ask God to give you eyesight. That's all he can give you anymore.

You already have everything else. The only thing you lack is eyes to see it. You need eyes.

I hope you've learned to pray that corporate name. I think that's why God gave us a plural and a singular record. Ask God for eyesight for yourself.

Ask God for eyesight for your church, for anybody that you're connected with, for your ministry. Ask God for the group, because God not only teaches us to pray for ourselves. He didn't say my father who art in heaven.

It's our father. And he takes the whole church into the closet. And we need to learn to pray for everybody that God would open the eyes of the church.

My heart goes out honestly in compassion for Christians. I see them all the time who are running here and there like butterflies trying to find this experience and that experience and suck nectar from every flower. Uh, you have the Lord and all you need is eyes to see it.

Every Christian is a multi-billionaire in Christ. I used to think the opposite. I used to think some Christians are rich and some Christians are poor.

No, every Christian's rich. You know why? Because every Christian has Christ. Say, well, some have life and some have abundant life.

No, life is a person. His name is Jesus. Abundant life is a person.

His name is Jesus. Every Christian has abundant life. They just haven't seen it.

So pray for yourself and pray for others and pray for me that God would give us. So we'll close there. Comments or questions? I have a couple of questions.

Well, there is in the sense that the poor man who things is described as the rich man. Anybody attached to the treasures of this world, whether they have them or not, he is the rich man. If they're after these treasures.

Because he wants them to come to him for an explanation. You got the same thing in Luke 24. And yet, and the reason he gave the parables, he said to hide it.

But as they came for an explanation, then he gave it to them. The seed is the word of God and the soils means that he explains it to those who come. See Christians, the seeker who comes for an explanation gets it.

Commentators believe he is in opposition. Oh, I'm sure they're significant. I just don't know what it is.

Oh, they're significant. No. All right, let's probably.

Father, we do thank you so much that you've given us everything when you gave. We ask you now, Lord, to give us eyes to see more of him. Take us forward in the knowledge of Christ.

We thank you, Lord, as ages roll upon ages. You're going to be opening our eyes wider and wider in amazement. Our mouths wider and wider in amazement as we see all that we already possess.

Teach us to possess our possessors. We ask in Jesus. I wouldn't rather.

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