

# Blind Bartimaeus - the Unsaved Believer

by Major Ian Thomas

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*Jesus Christ is actively seeking people in the crowd and we can be the immediate object of his quest if we are willing to seek him with our whole heart.*

**Duration:** 44:45

**Scripture:** Mark 10:46

**Topics:** "Faith", "Salvation"

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## Description

Major Ian Thomas explores the story of Blind Bartimaeus, illustrating the plight of an unsaved believer who, despite his knowledge of Jesus, remained spiritually blind and beggarly until he recognized the Savior's presence. He emphasizes that true faith requires personal contact with Christ, moving beyond mere belief to a transformative relationship. Bartimaeus's cry for mercy symbolizes the urgent need for individuals to act on their faith and seek Jesus actively, despite societal pressures to remain silent. The sermon encourages listeners to embrace their identity as the immediate object of Christ's quest, highlighting the joy and responsibility that comes with true salvation. Ultimately, Thomas calls for a deliberate decision to receive Christ, moving from a state of spiritual poverty to one of vibrant faith.

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## Transcript

Blind Bartimaeus, the unsaved believer. I thought we might tonight focus our attention upon the story of an unsaved believer that's given to us in the Bible. It was read for us out of the 18th chapter of Luke's gospel, but we'll turn to it as it is recorded for us in the 10th chapter of Mark.

Mark chapter 10. It's the story of Bartimaeus. You know the story well enough.

46th verse of Mark 10. They came to Jericho, and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side, begging. Notice the grouping there.

First of all, of course, the Lord Jesus. He was there, always is, wherever you go. Of course, he's here tonight without a shadow of a doubt.

And then his disciples. And there are always some of those around. Doesn't matter where you go, there are always some of his disciples.

You can go to the most quaint, odd places in the world, but you'll find disciples. Sometimes quaint, odd disciples too. There are plenty of those around.

But doesn't matter where you go, you'll find disciples. Those who know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Redeemer and are numbered amongst those who have been raised from the dead and are sharing his resurrection. Doesn't matter where you go in the whole wide world, and I've proved it.

I've travelled in about 50 or 60 countries of the world, and I've never yet, never once, been to any place, anywhere, but I haven't found disciples. Don't let anybody persuade you that people don't get converted. They're getting converted by their thousands, all over the world.

You'll find disciples. When I was serving in the British forces, in the Royal Fusiliers, most famous regiment in the British Army, and as I can't resist telling folk always, largely responsible for winning the war, I was in the Middle East for part of my service, and I had a little book called Servicemen's Guide to Missions in the Middle East. Little red book.

It was like a Bible to me. And wherever I went, I could look it up and find where disciples were. And my fellow officers, they were quite astounded.

I'd be somewhere in the desert, and I'd say, if I had an hour or two to spare, I'm going off to see friends. They'd say, you can't have friends here. I'd say, I've got friends everywhere.

Members of the family. Because it doesn't matter where you go, you'll find disciples. The Lord Jesus, his disciples.

Just a few. You won't find many, but just a few. A handful.

And then of course, it said, a great number of people. The crowd. The Lord Jesus, his disciples, and the crowd.

Wherever you go, that's the grouping. And of course, normally, the crowd, by far, outnumbers the disciples. Of course, in a service like this, we anticipate that the proportion will be reversed.

Quite obviously, one would anticipate, on a Sunday evening service here in Ryde Baptist Church, the disciples will probably considerably outnumber the crowd. But there's the grouping. And of course, one other hidden away in the crowd.

The immediate object of Christ's quest. The one person in particular for whom he is around. And that's what makes life so incredibly exciting when you're a Christian.

And especially if it's your privilege, in one way or another, to proclaim the good news of the gospel. I don't mean just as a preacher. Just an ordinary businessman, housewife, schoolboy, university student, bus driver, taxi driver, wherever you may be.

It's your privilege and mine, if we know Jesus Christ, to be his witness. So I embrace, in the preaching of the gospel, all who, redeemed in the blood of Christ, have on their lips the good news that God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son. That whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

And what is so exciting is that no matter where you go, as a disciple, with the Lord Jesus present in the crowd, somewhere in the crowd, there will be the immediate object of his quest. Tucked away. Absolutely certainly tonight, here in this church congregation, although you're strangers to me, most of you, tucked away with some boy or girl or man or woman who is the immediate target for tonight.

Now I may never know. I may never know. But God does.

And incidentally, if you're the target, you'll know. And some of you don't even know what's going to hit you. That's what makes it so exciting.

We have tens of thousands of young folk come to Cape and Ray and our other centers. Well over a hundred thousand we've had. And any number of them come, utterly unwitting of what's going to hit them.

Pagan little rascals. Never been exposed to the gospel, but I've seen them grow up. I've seen the life transforming power of the Lord Jesus as he's broken into their lives because they were the immediate, immediate object of his quest.

It's exciting. Of course, it was true of the Lord Jesus when he was here on earth. In all many, many places.

You remember how on another occasion coming out near Jericho, same situation, there was that fat little man, Zacchaeus, climbing up a tree. Man who, though we're told he was little of stature, probably made up for his lack in height by sideways expansion. And couldn't get to the front because of the crowd.

And so he went ahead and climbed the sycamore tree. You remember the story. How he gathered the leaves around him, perched as he was precariously upon that inadequate branch, pretending that he was a sycamore bud.

Some bud. And the Lord Jesus, who had an immense sense of humor. He must have a sense.

He wouldn't give us a sense if he hadn't got one himself. And we're such funny creatures. The heaven must roar with laughter at the stupid things we do.

And as he was coming along, there he could think of this poor, fat little man, hiding up that tree, imagining the few leaves would hide him from God. No more stupid, no more ludicrous than the way some of us have in the past tried to hide from God, and probably one or two of you here still trying to hide. Just as ludicrous.

And of course the Lord Jesus, as you know, stopped right under that tree and pretended at first, because he didn't know that Zacchaeus was there. And if Zacchaeus had had the courage to let go of the branch he was holding on to, he'd have pat himself on the back. But he didn't let go.

And he probably thought, my, I have to choose in the very tree under which he's going to preach. That man didn't choose that tree. Christ chose the tree.

Wouldn't matter which tree he hid in. Any tree. Christ would have stood under that tree.

He could have hid himself in a cabbage. And Christ would have stood by the cabbage. Some cabbage.

You see, this is the marvellous thing about it. And then he looked straight up into his face. And you know what happens when one person in a crowd looks straight up and keeps looking up.

Everybody looks up. And Zacchaeus looked into this mass of faces. Looked like ten million.

His ears as red as beetroots. He could have wished himself anywhere but up that tree. And the Lord Jesus called him by name.

The immediate object of his quest. He was the woman by the well. Do you remember, sent all the disciples off so that the woman wouldn't be embarrassed.

And in the course of the conversation he said, go and get your husband. Don't have one. Right, he said.

You've had five. The man you're living with now isn't your husband. The immediate object of his quest.

Marvellously converted that woman. Marvellously converted. The means under God of bringing about a great spiritual awakening in her town when she went back.

The immediate object of his quest. That's why he went that way. He must needs go through Samaria.

That's how it's put. He had to go that way. Why? To meet that woman.

Late at night. Come in. You still up? Oh yes.

Waiting for you. What do you mean waiting for me? How did you know I was coming? Nicodemus. I may be a stranger to you but you're not a stranger to me.

I've been hanging around for a long time. Wish you'd come earlier. Nicodemus in the dead of night.

You don't really fancy that you're a stranger to Christ tonight. I'm sure there may be some to whom Christ is a stranger. But please don't fancy that you're a stranger to Christ.

There's nothing about you that he doesn't know. And you may be tucked away somewhere here in this little crowd. And the immediate object of his quest.

I remember preaching in a reformed church in in Auerich in Ostfriesland in Germany. After the service I was talking to a friend on the steps. And while we were talking my friend suddenly noticed a lanky 15 or 16 year old German boy.

And he looked terribly miserable. So miserable my friend couldn't help but remark upon it. And he nudged me.

He said, doesn't he look miserable? Well he did. I hate to see a boy look miserable. So I went up and I said, what's your name? He said, Ingel Lummer.

That's a name. They have names like that. It sounds more like a disease but it's actually a name.

And I said, were you in church? Well he said, yes. Did you listen to what I was saying? I did. Do you know that the Lord Jesus Christ is your savior and that he's redeemed you and lives in your heart? He said, no I don't.

Very bitterly. So I knew he didn't. He made it very clear.

I said, wouldn't you like to? And the amazing thing is this, that just as earnestly as he had answered bitterly, he said, yes. With all my heart. I said, what an extraordinary thing.

There you stand on front of the church steps just coming out of a service where I've explained exactly how a boy can be saved, looking as miserable as a foggy bank holiday, and you want Jesus Christ to save you with all your heart and Christ wants to save you with all his heart. What is there to stop it? Absolutely nothing. Isn't it crazy? All you've got to do is say thank you.

Then it was my turn to be taken by surprise. I'd hardly said that before he whipped off his cap, bowed his head and said thank you. That was all.

He was converted. The immediate object of this quest. A few years later he was in our Bible school in England.

The last time I actually saw him was in Aden in South Arabian Peninsula as a missionary with the Red Sea Mission team. Now he's in Western Canada. I just got a letter just a few weeks ago with his wife's photograph because he's got married, which is pretty odd.

But there was this miserable looking boy, you see. But the immediate object of Christ's quest. It's absolutely fascinating how the spirit of the living Christ will close in upon this boy, this girl, that man, that woman.

Just a week or two ago when I was in New Zealand, I spent the evening with a family called Faulkner in Howick. Same district where we have our Capon Ray Lodge. I went to see the family because I'd met their son in Europe, John.

They were members of a Baptist church there in Howick. And he'd been to a Christian youth camp. I think he'd been moved, but although emotionally stirred and maybe even having registered a decision.

He wasn't regeneral. He was a believer, but he hadn't understood really what it meant to exercise faith. So he was an unsaved believer.

And of course inevitably it just faded out, fizzled out within a week or two. And he hit the road. Came from a good home, but he just left home.

19 years of age to sing pop songs in dance halls and coffee shops, bars, hotels. Did it for a year. And his great ambition was to find his way to Europe and then get a bit of vocal training and fight his way up until he was one of the top ten.

And so he transferred what little money he had to a bank in England. He got on a Russian ship that was due to go to Moscow, but was to call it Southampton. And he was going to get off at Southampton.

Managed to get a visitor's visa. But when he got off at Southampton, he didn't fall into the hands of thieves, but he fell into the hands of something infinitely worse, British immigration. And they were rough, really rough.

He ended up in jail to be deported next morning. Taken in a police car, but he pleaded with them not to put him on the ship to send him to Russia. In New Zealand, he had bumped into Dr. Tony Han, who directs our youth centre there, and his wife.

And our director from close to Muller that Mr. Gilchrist mentioned, Dr. Dwight Wadsworth, who's been here in Sydney, happened to be in New Zealand and bumped into the boy too. And hearing of his ambition to go to Europe, he said, if ever you find your way to Europe, come and see me in Germany. So he said,

send me to Germany.

And they put him on a plane to Germany, which was heading for Hamburg, way up in the north, miles away from our centre in Germany. But a truck backed into that plane, damaged the wings, so they turfed all the passengers out and stuck them on a plane for Frankfurt, about 60 miles away from where we are. Amazing, isn't it? Well, of course, when he got to Frankfurt, had very little money in his pocket.

It was all in the bank in England. Couldn't speak a word of German, but an American couple graciously took pity on him, drove him into the city, dumped him in a hotel. They went to the American consulate, and he said, I'm looking for a man whose name I can't remember.

And he lives within the address I've lost. But it's something to do with a place called Caponray. That's all he knew, just one word, Caponray.

Please find him. Well, that was a tall order, so tall they couldn't reach. And they looked up everything, couldn't find nothing.

So he went to the British consulate, same story, I'm looking for a man whose name I can't remember, at an address I've lost, something to do with Caponray. But it isn't called Caponray in Germany, it's called Falkenträger, Torchbearers in German, close to Mühle, not Caponray Hall. So they couldn't find a thing.

So the poor boy was very depressed, here he was, penniless, without the language, in a strange country, other side of the world from his home, he was feeling pretty lonely. And he was just commiserating with himself and talking to the girl at the desk in the British consulate, when a young German girl came by, listened to the conversation, excused herself for breaking into the conversation, she says, I trust you won't think me rude, but I overheard the conversation, and you used the word Caponray, and my mother went to that place 20 years ago when she was a girl. And if you'd like to ring up the London Exchange and tell them to find a place called Caponray up in the northwest of England, they'll be able to give you the address of the place in German.

And they did. And I met him three weeks later, at our German conference grounds, where he was participating in our German Bible school. Couldn't understand a word of German, so he wasn't learning too much.

But do you know what he said? He said, I haven't read my Bible so much in all my life as I have these last three weeks, it's just as though God were the other side of a thick plate-glassed window, as though he was trying to say something to me. I said, I think he is. Loud and clear.

And it was my privilege to take him back to England just a few days later, got him in for a year, he attended our Bible school, and I last saw him just before Christmas, when he came to the Sunday morning service in Los Angeles, where I was preaching, where he's in a Bible college for four years, preparing for Christian ministry. The immediate object of Christ's quest, on a ship heading for Moscow, way the other side of the world. You can't run away from God.

Why try? He's got nothing but good things for you. Well, here was blind Bartimaeus. The immediate object of Christ's quest.

A poor, blind, beggarly believer. You say, why do you call him a believer? Well, from the context. It says, when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have

mercy.

Mercy on me. He heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth. That was his human title.

Just as I might say, Mr. Smith of London, or Mrs. Brown of Brisbane, or Tom Jones of Adelaide. Jesus of Nazareth. That's where he lived.

But the moment, the moment they said, this is Jesus of Nazareth, his human title, immediately he began to cry out and say, Jesus, son of David. That was his messianic title. That was the Bible title used in the Old Testament for the Christ of God.

The Savior. Having heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, why should he call out to the Messiah? Because sitting as a poor, blind beggar, somehow he had become unshatterably convinced that this Jesus was God's son. The promised Messiah.

I don't know how he came to that conviction. He had of course listened as a beggar sitting in the gutter to the chatter of the crowd. He had heard of course of the amazing things that were happening.

The dumb could speak and the deaf could hear, and the lame could walk, and the blind could see. He probably heard how some miserable hypocrite, playing religion, had dragged a poor woman and thrown her at his feet and said, shall we stone her? Caught in the act of adultery. Stone her? That's what Moses said, shall we stone her to death? Said Jesus, right.

That's exactly what Moses said. Take her out, stone her to death. But half a minute he said.

Let he that is among you be the first to cast a stone who is without sin. And he began to write with his finger on the sand. And as they watched what he wrote, from the oldest to the youngest, they couldn't get out quick enough.

They didn't seem to like what he was writing. Convicted by their own conscience. I think he was just writing a few things he knew about each one of them.

As he could about you tonight. And he was left alone with this poor miserable woman. Doth no man condemn thee? None nor.

Nor do I. I don't condone your sin, but I forgive it. Now go and sin no more. He heard all of this as he sat there in the gutter.

And he became compellingly aware that this must be, this must be the son of David, of whom as a Jewish boy, of course he had heard from the Old Testament scriptures. Every Jewish child had to learn whole hunks of the Bible. Hunks of it.

He would have learned a passage like this for instance. It would have been still probably vivid in his mind. O every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.

He that hath no money, come buy and eat. What a message for a blind, poor beggar. He that hath no money, come buy and eat.

Yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear and come unto me. Here in your soul shall live.

I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Even the sure mercies of David, the Messiah, the Christ of God. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.

Call ye upon him while he is near. When he is near enough to be found, seek him. When he is near enough to be called upon, call upon him.

Don't miss your chance. He remembered this. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

Let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him. To our God for he will abundantly pardon. This Jesus of Nazareth.

God's son. Son of David. I don't know just how he became convinced of the facts.

But that he was a believer is evidenced by his reaction at once. As they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. But you see the tragedy was this.

That until this point, until this moment in time. Everything that he had come to know about the Lord Jesus Christ. And everything he had come to believe about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Had left him exactly where it found him. Poor, blind and a beggar in the gutter. And of course, whatever you may have come to know about Jesus Christ.

Whatever you may have come to believe about Jesus Christ. If you've never made personal contact. If you've never mixed it with faith.

That at your invitation, deliberately, intelligently, personally. Has allowed him to move into your heart and your life. Then everything you know and everything you believe about Jesus Christ.

Leaves you spiritually in the gutter. Unchanged. What he knew and believed about Jesus Christ didn't change his way of life.

Didn't lift him out of his circumstance. Left him where it found him. That's all that religion can do for you.

That's all that Christianity can do for you and for me. If it's just Christianity. That's all the Bible can do for you and for me.

If you just like to learn whole chunks of the Bible by heart. And do nothing, absolutely nothing about it. Then you'd have to join Bartimaeus where he sat.

Poor, blind, beggarly believer. Unsaved. A faithless believer.

The impotence of an impersonal believer. I suppose the folk most afflicted with this are those boys and girls who are brought up in evangelical families. Where from their earliest days, like that boy I spoke to this morning.

Around the family table and the reading of the Bible. Going to church. You know, shoved into Sunday school.

They've had it day in, day out. Week in, week out. Month in, month out.

Till everything is utterly familiar. But they've never come to Christ. Never come to Christ.

A familiarity that has almost bred contempt. Are you one of those? You could preach the gospel back to me almost word for word. But you're not a Christian.

You're not converted. You're not saved. You've never been to Jesus.

You don't know that your sins are forgiven. You're not born again. You're not alive.

You've been house trained. You do the right thing and say the right thing. You go through the motions.

But you're unregenerate. You're spiritually dead. You're a poor, blind, beggarly believer.

Just like Bartimaeus. What made the difference? The sudden awareness that Jesus himself was at hand. That's what made the difference.

And this is what makes the difference again and again in the lives of those who've gone on sleepily. Year in, year out and never been really born again. Suddenly they're confronted with the fact that Jesus is alive and Jesus is on hand.

That he's passing by. It may be through some office friend. It may be as you go perhaps to some Christian camp and you're precipitated into the company of a lot of young folk who are alive in Jesus Christ.

And there is silhouetted against their liveliness your own state of death and destitution. It may be that the Holy Spirit graciously moves into your life on the occasion of some bereavement. Or some act of which you're downright ashamed and makes you really frightened.

Frightened of yourself. And God uses it to assure you that there is somebody alive and on hand near enough to help. You could hear the buzz of excitement.

He knew that something strange was on. And he grabbed at somebody's shirt I expect and said, what's on? What's the excitement? They said, Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.

And suddenly he recognized that he was near enough to be sought and found. He was near enough to call upon. And suddenly he recognized the sheer bankruptcy of a belief that left him where it found.

Poor, blind and a beggar in the garden. And he began to cry out. And he traded the impotence of his impersonal belief for the importunity of a saving faith.

He said, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy. Have mercy upon me. Please do for me what I've known and believed.

Do for me what I've heard you've done for others. Move into my life. Lift me out of this situation.

In other words, for the first time in his life he acted intelligently. On what he had come to know and believe. And what was the reaction of the crier? But that's the extraordinary thing.

The reaction of the crowd was the same than it is today. Many charged him that he should hold his peace. As soon as he began to act intelligently on what he knew.

The crowd said, keep your mouth shut. Get back into your gutter. Get back to where you belong.

We don't mind what you believe about Jesus Christ. We don't mind what you know about Jesus Christ. But don't make a fool of yourself.

Don't act as though it was true. Now isn't that extraordinary? Nobody minds you going to church. Nobody minds you being a member of a Bible class.

Nobody minds you singing in the choir. Nobody minds you being a soloist. Nobody minds you singing in an oratorio.

I know that my Redeemer lives. But please, please, please don't act as though you had got a Redeemer who was alive. You can sing in the choir.

Man of sorrows, what a name for the Son of God who came. Ruined sinners to reclaim. Hallelujah, what a Saviour.

Fine, they say, marvellous. So glad you're singing in the choir. But please don't come and tell us that you're one of the ruined sinners that Jesus saved.

Don't make a fool of yourself. Don't go to fanatical extremes. You can turn religion and Christianity and the cross and Easter and Christmas and witching.

You can turn them a whole lot into religious entertainment. But please, please don't be real. We don't mind you being a phony.

The world's full of them. Religious, political, financial, social. The world's just packed tight with phonies.

We don't mind you being a phony. You can sit in the front row at church. We don't care.

Get in the pulpit if you like. But don't get converted. Don't get saved.

Don't get redeemed. Don't be real. Extraordinary, isn't it? Ever met the crowd? Of course you have, in your school class.

Some of you have met the crowd even in your own family circle. I did. I was the only person in my family.

I was the youngest boy in the family. And my brother would fling my Bible across the room when I wanted to read it at night. Ever met the crowd? Perhaps you're one of them.

Perhaps you're one of the crowd that keeps the boy sitting next to you from coming to Christ. Because you've told him all too often to get back into his gutter where he belongs. And not to make a fool of himself.

Wouldn't that be sad? But the marvelous thing is this. When a person has really become aware of the living Christ in touching distance. It takes more than the crowd to keep his mouth shut.

He cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. He didn't care to listen to what the crowd said. That's the marvelous thing that's always happening.

Always happening. Suddenly as the Spirit of God moves in upon a boy, a girl, a man, a woman. The immediate object of Christ's quest.

Tucked away in the crowd. And the Lord Jesus becomes compellingly present. Takes more than the crowd to keep him mouth shut.

He cried so much the more. He was sick and tired of being an unsaved believer. Are you? Sick and tired of being a member of a Sunday school class? Or a scripture union reader? And not saved? Of going through all the motions and reciting the evangelical jargon? And knowing in your heart the whole time you're a phony? He was.

And he did a very sensible thing. Casting away his garment he rose and came to Jesus. At the invitation of the crowd? No.

The crowd will never invite you to come to Christ. They'll only lead you to hell. It was at the invitation of the disciples.

Jesus stood still. Of course he did. That's what he was there for.

Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man saying to him, Be of good comfort, rise. He called it thee.

That was the message of a disciple. They came to him and said, cheer up. The Lord Jesus is waiting for you.

He calls for you. Calls for me? Yes. You.

That's the message of a disciple. Now I warrant that many a disciple is pretty clumsy in the process. Some of them are a bit like bulls in china shops.

They can be beastly tactless. And they may embarrass you on occasions. But listen, never despise a disciple.

You don't often meet them. They've got very good news. And maybe even though they did blurt it out, you just don't know how much courage it took when they did blurt it out.

Never despise a disciple. He's got very good news. He's got the kind of news that will get you out of the gutter.

Spiritually. He threw away his garments. You might think that was wasteful.

But you didn't see his garments. Just beggars rags. Beggars rags.

And he dropped the lot. Of course. You see every rag he had in his back was second hand.

Every crust he stubbed into his mouth was second hand. Any coin he ever fiddled was tossed out of charity from somebody who didn't need it. His whole life was second hand.

He was a beggar. You can sit week after week in church. Participate.

And not with insincerity. And yet. Your only experience of Christ second hand.

The experience of a poor blind beggarly believer. He dropped the lot. He dropped the lot.

And he came to Christ. The Lord Jesus said. What wilt thou that I should do to you? Whatever would the blind man expect of the Lord Jesus.

Of whose reputation he'd heard so much. Made the blind see. The lame walk.

The dumb to speak. And the deaf to hear. Whatever should he expect.

Oh yes. But you see the Lord Jesus didn't want there to be any mistake or any misunderstanding about this. In so many words I think what he was saying to Bartimaeus was this.

Bartimaeus. I want to make quite sure that you know what the score is. I want to make quite sure that you know what you want.

Do you realize that if I open your eyes you can never beg again? You can't sit there living on charity. Not the moment I open your eyes. The moment I heal you.

The moment I open your eyes. You're on your own two feet. And you've got a job to do.

New responsibilities. And instead of living on other people's charity. You'll be at the giving end instead of the getting end.

Maybe I've got you wrong Bartimaeus. Maybe all you're really looking for is a nice soft cushion. That I can give you so that you can beg more comfortably.

Masses of people go to church for that. Lots and lots of people embrace religion. Not because they want to be different.

But just as a cushion for a bad conscience. That isn't salvation. I wouldn't deceive you tonight if you received Christ as your Redeemer.

If you claim forgiveness through the precious blood that he shed upon the cross. It means that from that very moment the Lord Jesus and the power of his resurrection. Will claim the right by his Holy Spirit to invade your soul.

And occupy your humanity. So that your hands become his hands. Your feet his feet.

Your lips his to speak with. Your ears his to hear with. Your mind his to think with.

Your eyes his to see with. From that moment on you become expendable for God. New responsibilities.

Exciting. Marvelous. Caught up into the timeless purpose of an eternal God.

So that Jesus Christ takes up residence within your humanity. And walks again the streets of the city of Sydney. That's what it means to become a Christian.

And Jesus Christ wanted to lead him past the peril of merely impressionable emotions. It's the easiest thing in the world to stir people's emotions. And get them to register some shallow decision on the crest of some emotional weight.

And it's of absolutely nil spiritual content. I'm not interested. I want you to know this.

That if you were to become a Christian tonight. If you were to claim Christ as your Redeemer. It would introduce you to a new vocation.

It would mean that he as God has the right to claim total monopoly of every area of your being. Body, soul, spirit. Mind, emotion and will.

You become a body wholly filled and flooded with Christ himself. And your body becomes available for him to live with. Honor.

Nothing less than that. And Bartimeo said. Lord.

That I might receive my sight. I don't care what the consequences are. I'm through with the beggars rags.

I'm never going back to that gutter. Open my eyes. Whatever new responsibilities it may involve.

From now on. Unexpendable. And the Lord Jesus said.

Go thy way. Your faith has allowed me to make you whole. And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way.

You know what it says in Luke's gospel as it read to us. Immediately he received his sight and followed him. Glorifying God.

And all the people. When they saw it. Gave praise unto God.

They were amazed. Staggered. Absolutely staggered.

He was a man who till then had been the object of their pity. A second hand beggar. And the one who had been the object of their pity was now a source of wonder.

Amazed. Staggered. God's been specializing in this all down the centuries.

He took a profligate drunken sot by the name of Augustine. Saved his soul. And Saint Augustine was the man who traditionally was the first to bring the gospel to the British Isles.

And indirectly to your Australian shores. Richard Weaver. Drunken brawling fighter.

Would go to the public houses. As the godless miner he was. And fight.

And come back battered and bleeding. To grab his mother by her hair. And drag her round and round the kitchen floor.

By her hair. Because she dared to pray for him. But God saved his soul.

And Richard Weaver converted to God. Cleansed in the blood of Christ. Regenerate through the gift to him of the Holy Spirit.

Through whose presence he shared the life of a risen savior. As the converted collier went up and down the mining districts of Yorkshire. And preached the gospel with such authority.

That big wicked evil men. Would drop on their knees in tears of repent. And the one time object of pity.

Richard Weaver. Became a source of wonder. Say.

Can I bring you the message of a. A disciple tonight. Pretty clumsy. I know.

Pretty rugged. But good news. The Lord Jesus is passing by.

Maybe so far as you're concerned. Never. Never to pass this way again.

And yet you are the immediate object of his quest. And it's my. Joyful privilege.

To bring to you in his name. His invitation. Arise he says.

He calleth thee. Wouldn't it be a marvelous thing. To trade your.

Impotent. Impersonal belief. For a living faith.

And know a living God. Is there some doubt in your mind as to your relationship to Jesus Christ tonight. Would you like to clarify the issues.

I'm going to give you a very simple. Opportunity to receive the Lord Jesus. Don't misunderstand me.

I'm not going to embarrass you. I'm not going to trap you. I'm going to make it as easy as I possibly can.

For you to make an intelligent deliberate decision. To receive Christ personally as your redeemer. And allow him.

To move into your life. In the person of the Holy Spirit. Open your spiritual eyes.

To discover the illimitable wealth. That immediately becomes yours. By his presence.

Living in your heart. To share his life with you on earth. Through time.

And on for eternity. To overflow in blessing to others. As you step out into a new area.

Of spiritual responsibility. With all that he is. To give you all that it takes.

A perfect friend. Who knows the worst about you. And loves you just the same.

The way we're going to do it is very simple. The vast majority of the folk in this service here tonight are already Christians. They can look back to the day when they first accepted the Lord Jesus.

And today are profoundly thankful. That's why they're here. And they're going to be more than glad to help me help you receive Christ.

And I'm going to pray very simply as once I did as a boy of twelve. Sentence by sentence. Although then it was totally unknown to anybody else.

It was in the silence of my heart. I received Christ and he redeemed me. He's been my saviour ever since.

Only reason why I'm here tonight. But I'm going to pray very simply as I once prayed then. And Christian folk.

As disciples and in Christ's dear name. Are going to pray after me in the same words. Aloud.

Just simply. Sentence by sentence. Not for themselves.

Because you can only pray this prayer once for yourself. But for your sake. And if you are prepared tonight to mingle your voice with ours.

As though nobody were here but just you and Christ. Every doubt in your mind can be banished forever. As to your relationship to the Lord Jesus.

You can come to Christ. Just like Bartimaeus. And know him personally for yourself.

No longer second hand. But in all the reality of his indwelling presence. After that.

We shall probably sing our closing hymn and dismiss. No after meeting. No instruction.

This isn't a trap. This is just an opportunity for you to receive Christ. Then you can go home.

I may never know that you receive Christ tonight. That's not my business. I'd like to.

But it's not my business. It is his business. Who died for you.

And that's why he's passing by. And that's why he gives you this invitation. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

I'm going to pray very simply. Sentence by sentence. Just a simple deliberate intelligent prayer.

Telling Jesus Christ. That he's welcome. To do the work of the Saviour.

Christian folk are going to pray after me. For your sake. In the same words.

And without any embarrassment. Whatever to you. You can banish all doubt in your heart.

As simply, humbly, unashamedly. You mingle your voice with ours and pray with us. And you'll be talking not to us.

You won't be talking to yourself. You'll be talking to the Lord Jesus. Who will respond instantly to your request.

In faith that he should move into your life. Redeem you. Impart to you his Holy Spirit.

And by his presence. Raise you from the dead. And make you spiritually alive.

Born again. Child of God forever. Now let's pray.

Dear Lord Jesus Christ. I know that on the cross you died to redeem sinners. Through your blood to pay their debt.

I'm one of those sinners for whom you died. And I'm sorry that my sin took you to the cross. But I'm thankful too dear Lord.

That you did it for me. I've known it and believed it for a long time. But never acted on it.

A poor, blind, beggarly believer. But now I trust you. Deliberately as my savior.

I receive you gladly into my life. As my redeemer. My Lord.

My God. My life. Thank you for redemption.

Thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit. By whose presence I'm born again. And from now on and forever will share your life.

Thank you Lord Jesus. For your name's sake. Amen.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/32/SID32223.mp3>

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