

The Son Stood Still
Mark 10:46-52
Reading: Isaiah 9:2-9 (or, Isaiah 35)

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He didn't *have* to stop...

- a. He was **determined** to *keep moving*.
 - i. You read it on *His face*, and in *His stride*.
 - ii. It made His friends *uncomfortable*.
- b. He was on a *timetable*.
 - His *destination* was now very near.
- c. And there had to be *more on His mind* than anyone could imagine.
 - It seems it would be *almost impossible* to **distract** Him.
- d. But then He heard the sound of *something He loved*.
 - i. A *desperate & persistent* cry.
 - ii. It lifted above the *din of the crowd*.
 - iii. *It wouldn't stop*.
 - iv. The cry *penetrated* His thoughts.
- e. It was a sound like a *prayer – the sound of faith*.
- f. *And so the Son stood still...*
- g. Turn w/ me to **Mark 10:46-52**.

What kind of faith will stop Jesus in His tracks?

1. *Desperate.*
2. *Intelligent.*
3. *Persistent.*
4. *Eager.*
5. *Following.*

Wouldn't you like to have faith like that? Me too... Pray!

1. Bartimaeus was a desperate man.

- a. Here is the life of Bartimeaus:
 - i. Blind (perhaps not always).
 1. Blindness was very common in the ANE.
 2. Disease; parasites; poor hygiene; filthy conditions.
 - ii. He sits in the same place beside the road outside beautiful Jericho.
 1. This is the new (Roman) Jericho, about 1 mile south of the OT Jericho. 20 miles NE of Jerusalem.
 2. It's the winter palace of the Herodian rulers, and they had made it beautiful.
 3. It's known as the "City of Roses."
 - iii. The son of Timaeus raises his hands for alms.
 - iv. Is only hope in the pity of the religious pilgrims who are going up to Jerusalem, this time for the Passover.
 1. The crowds should be large & hopefully filled with pious generosity.
 - v. Here is the life of Bartimaeus: blind, begging, absolutely nothing to commend him.
- b. But Bartimaeus picks up on the sounds of an especially large crowd approaching from Jericho.
 - i. The determined bustle of many men & women.
 - ii. The crowd follows the lead of one man – His name sweeps through ranks of the roadside spectators.

- iii. v. 47 could be read like this: *And when he heard, "It is Jesus the Nazarene!" he began to cry out...*
- iv. Bartimaeus was seated; probably those around him were standing to catch a closer look. The crowd must have buzzed...
 - 1. "It's Jesus, the Nazarene!" "What's He doing here?" "Why is He going **south**?" "Doesn't He know what waits in Jerusalem?" (PAUSE)
 - 2. "The Nazarene Teacher!" "**The Healer...**" "He's here?" "Passing by **me**?"
 - 3. "**Son of David**, Jesus, have mercy on me!"
- v. A blind beggar *has nothing to lose...*
- c. We've seen this time & again in Mark: *Desperation is the fertile soil of faith.*
 - i. The woman with *bleeding*. Desperate just to *touch* Him!
 - ii. *Jairus* with his dying little daughter.
 - iii. The *despairing* man w/ the demon possessed son.
 - iv. The Gentile woman (*Syrophoenician*) and her demon possessed daughter. She *pressed* Jesus for help. "*O woman, Thy faith is great! Be it done for you as you wish.*"
- d. *Jesus the Nazarene is passing by.* Are you *desperate* to know Him? ...to *walk* with Him daily?
 - i. You're not too busy, or too cool, to call out to Him, are you?
 - ii. "*Blessed are those who **hunger & thirst** after righteousness, for they shall be **satisfied.***"

There is nothing wrong with desperate faith!

2. Bartimaeus called out with an intelligent faith.

- a. The blind beggar *saw* some things other people *seemed to miss!*
- b. “*Son of David, Jesus...*” (v. 47, then v. 48: Bartimaeus called Him *over & again*).
 - i. You know what *that title* means:
 - Promised *Heir* of David’s Throne.
 - Thou *Greater David*.
 - *King! Messiah!*
- c. What others *speculated*, or perhaps *dismissed*, blind Bartimaeus saw clearly:
 - Jesus the Nazarene was the promised Davidic King – the Savior.
- d. And perhaps Bartimaeus could *see inscribed* with his *mind’s eye* the **OT promises** that heralded Messiah.
 - i. *The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, the lamp will shine on them.* Isa 9:2
 - ii. Or maybe even this one:

*Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,
And the ears of the deaf will be **un-stopped**.* Isa 35:5

- e. And just maybe Bartimaeus had heard the stories of this rabbi from Galilee who had healed so many, even *restoring the sight* of a blind man in Bethsaida.
- Let me read you that brief account again...(8:22-26)
- f. We've lived in a time when people around us are very skeptical, unwilling to accept the idea of a rational faith. That faith can be grounded in truth.
- i. We're moving into a day when people around us are all too subjective, unwilling to accept the idea of objective truth.
 - ii. So it follows: faith doesn't need an intelligent basis – *you just need to believe!*
 - iii. You remember that over-worked line from the 70's: *Keep the faith, baby!* Faith in what?
- g. Bartimaeus faith was desperate, but it wasn't dumb!
- i. He understood that Nazarene was the Messiah, the Son of David.
 - ii. The blind beggar understood that Messiah was able to hear him...and restore him.
- h. Beloved, *Jesus loves faith*; faith that has, as its object, *the truth*:
- Jesus, the Son of David, died for sinners, and was raised again, and lives.

Bartimaeus was desperate, but his faith was intelligent.

3. Bartimaeus was *not about to be stopped!* (Read vv. 47&48)

- a. “*Not cool!*” I hear my kids say that every once & awhile...
- b. Maybe *that’s* what was going on in vv. 47 & 48.
 - i. When the roadside beggar figured out who this was, headed towards Jerusalem, he began to cry out (v. 47):
 - Mark uses a present tense verb to picture Bartimaeus crying out *right now*; he’s trying to *push us right into* that roadside picture.
 - “*Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!*” (2X)
 - ii. But people *in the crowd & along the road* began to **scold** him.
 - Not just one *heckler*, but many...
 - Not just one *stern word*, but over & over...
 - “*Be quiet!*” “*Not cool, Bartimaeus!*”
 - iii. Now Mark changes his *verb tense*; the idea of *repeated action*:
 - Instead of *slowing down*, Bartimaeus *picks it up*.
 - The more they *hush*, the more he *cries out!*
 - “*Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!*” (3X)
 - (This guy’s like a blaring, broken record! Well, I guess we don’t have broken records any more – do *iPods* ever skip?)

- c. Bartimaeus' faith was demonstrated by his *persistence*.
 - i. He was *desperate*.
 - ii. He *knew* who this was; that only Messiah could help him.
 - iii. *He wasn't going to be stopped*.
- d. People around you **will not applaud** when you call out for Christ...

If you want to come to Jesus, you can't care; you can't give up...

4. Bartimaeus was eager!

- a. **The Nazarene stops.** The *crowd* stops. Yet the road is still *restless & noisy*.
 - i. Bartimaeus *can't quite make out* what's going on...but *now* the scolders are *pulling at him*...
 - ii. Their *irritation* is replaced by an *unexpected urgency*!
 “Take courage! “Jump up!” “He calls for you.”
- b. *You think the blind man isn't eager to come!?!*
 - i. Here's *something surprising* for you in **v. 50 (look)**!
 - ii. Now, what blind beggar *tosses his coat*...
 - iii. (probably his *only* coat)...
 - iv. off beside the road...
 - v. *jumps up*...
 - vi. And *runs away*...leaving it lying, *who knows where*, on the ground? (*How will he ever hope to find it again?*)
- c. “What do you want Me to do for you?”
 - i. Jesus *knows* what Bartimaeus wants.
 - ii. But Bartimaeus needs to *express his eager faith*.
- d. “My master – **to see again!**”

- e. Helen Keller (the celebrated deaf & mute), said, “*Better to be blind and see with your heart, than to have good two eyes and see nothing.*”
- f. Beloved, there are *spiritually blind men* all around us who have *understood the Master’s call*.
 - i. Their friends have *tugged at them*, urging them to *take courage* – to ***jump up!***
 - **To heed His call.**
 - ii. And they don’t have the *eagerness of faith* to cast off ***anything***,
 - ...not to *get up*,
 - ...nor *run* to the Savior.
- g. If you’e here this morning, and you understand that Jesus came to *call sinners to repentance...*
 - i. But you’re for just *waiting* for something...
 - ii. (maybe another *year or two* to pass)
 - iii. (maybe to *take care of a little business* first)
 - iv. ***Your soul is grave danger.***

5. Bartimaeus had a faith that followed (*read v. 52*).

- a. Here is the *confirmation & reward* of Bartimaeus' faith.
 - i. Jesus *calls* him & Jesus *restores* him!
 - ii. When you *collate* all the available *facts* of this healing from all three *Synoptic* gospels, you learn it went like this:
 - Matt 20 – Jesus was moved w/ *compassion*.
 - Matt 20 – The Lord *touched* him.
 - Luke 18 – He spoke: “*Receive your sight.*”

And...

 - Mark 10 - “...*your faith has saved you.*”
 - iii. Luke 18 – Bartimaeus, and everyone around him, *glorified God for the immediate healing*.
 - iv. This is ***last miracle of healing*** before the **Cross!**
- b. Our story concludes by saying that ***instead of going his way***, Bartimaeus *began following Jesus* on the road.
 - i. This word in v. 52 for *follow* can include the idea of following *as a disciple* (Greek - ακολουθεω).
 - ii. This same word is used to describe the responses of the *four fisherman* (P & A; J & J) and *Levi*, when Jesus called them.
 - iii. Mark's grammar indicates that this **was just the beginning** of *following* for Bartimaeus...

- c. Can you think about that with me?
- i. Did Bartimaeus *follow Jesus* on into **Jerusalem**?
 - ii. Did he follow Him *in sorrow* to **Golgotha**?
 - iii. Did he wait *in fear* in **Jerusalem**?
 - iv. Did he follow his *resurrected Lord* to **Galilee**?
 - v. Did he *linger in Jerusalem* waiting for *promise of the Holy Spirit*?

Mark 8:34 – Jesus described saving faith like this: “*If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*”

Genuine faith not only comes to Jesus (desperate, intelligent, persistent, eager), it follows Him wherever He goes.

6. *Bartimaeus was an unlikely hero of faith, wasn't he!*
- a. He started the day as a *blind beggar*, sitting by the road with his *hands out*.
 - b. And spent the rest of his life *following Jesus!*
 - c. Christian, as you read about this man's surprising faith, *are you convicted of the need to strengthen your own walk w/ Christ?*
 - i. Do you need a *desperate & persistent faith* like Bartimaeus?
 - ii. I'd like to recommend something to deepen your faith?
 - iii. I have *three passages* from the Bible:
 - **Psalm 51.**
 - **Ezekiel 14:1-11.**
 - **Matthew 5:1-13** (*Beatitudes*).
 - iv. I encourage you to take *just one of them*, and *pore over it* this week, and *pray over its message*: ask God to use His Word to *feed your faith*.
 - v. *Why this application?* Why do I think this will help you?
 - Because the Bible says faith comes by hearing the *Word of Christ* (Rom 10:17).
 - d. But what if you're *not* a Christian? **You need the Savior!**
 - i. **I urge you** – follow the lead of Bartimaeus:
 - *Blind & begging* – even your righteousness is as filthy rags.
 - *Desperate* – you have nothing to commend you to God. No hope!
 - *Calling out* as Christ passes...
 - Calling until the *Son stands still*, & beckons.
 - **“Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!”**
 - ii. Please, *don't let Him pass you...* **Pray!**