

Mark 10:32-52

“You’ve Got My Attention, Now What Do You Want Me To Do?”

You know, looking through the lens of the love of Christ for humanity; the fact that He’s not willing that *any* should perish but that *all* should come to repentance, the fact that He has so *loved* us that He’s given Himself *for* us it absolutely amazes me that there are people who *refuse* to *accept* Him and *willfully reject* Him. Oh, it happens and I know that, I’ve been on the other side of that as well, there were a # of yrs that as a young person I didn’t follow Christ, didn’t have any desire toward Christ, I wasn’t *hostile* toward Christ, but had no desire to follow Him nonetheless. I wanted to do my own thing and pursue my own priorities and Jesus just didn’t fit into that plan. In reality I just didn’t have an accurate understanding *of* Him, I didn’t know what I thought I knew *about* Him, I didn’t honestly know what the word of God taught *concerning* Him, I knew about religion, but didn’t understand the idea of a personal relationship with the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all that’s contained therein. But when I began to get a grasp on His love for me, the fact that it didn’t matter the things I’d done, the places I’d been; He loved me, was willing to forgive me, He just wanted to walk with me and make me whole, renew my heart, my mind, take away the stain and the guilt of sin I came to a place where I didn’t want to fight Him anymore, didn’t want to resist Him anymore, I *wanted* to be forgiven, I *wanted* to be reconciled, to be made *right* before God. and Now I’m in a place where it’s difficult for me to understand why anyone *wouldn’t* want to be made right with God. I know the biblical reasons, they love their sin, people are prideful, they don’t want to admit their need, their self insufficiency, they want to somehow stand on their own, yet it’s an impossibility.

A sinful individual cannot stand on their own in the presence of a holy and righteous God; we need someone who will stand in the gap, someone who will make a way where there was no way. Someone who can impute an acceptable righteousness to us so that there can be an acceptance *of* us in the sight of God, and that’s of course where Jesus comes in. Which brings us back full circle in that not everyone wants to accept Jesus, in spite of His love, His willing sacrifice of Himself there will be those who rather than humble themselves *before* Him and open their heart *to* Him, they will walk away *from* Him in sadness and sorrow being still in their sin. That was the story of the rich young ruler that we examined last week.

He had everything that this world esteems as greatness, wealth, youth, power and prominence, yet he was still lacking, there was still a void in his heart that nothing seemed to satisfy. Jesus loved him, sought to minister *to* Him, yet in the end he wasn’t willing to repent and turn from those things that got in between him and whole hearted commitment to Christ. He rejected Jesus and walked away sorrowful; which is *always* the ultimate result of rejecting Jesus. Because apart from Christ the bible says that we are with out hope, being with out God in the world. He made a detrimental decision, and the record of that is written so that we might look *at* that, think *through* that, learn *from* that and not make the same mistake. Jesus brings us to a place where we have to make a decision, we’ve got to decide; will we follow *after* Him, or walk away *from* Him?

Today we'll see in contrast a man who had nothing and couldn't get to Jesus fast enough. Jesus said it's hard for those with riches to enter the kingdom of God. It's difficult for us to let go of the things of this world, we settle in and become satisfied with this world and it tests and tries our hearts to think of being with out the material comforts of this life.

You go to a 3rd world nation and you find hearts hungry to hear of hope, a Savior, One who will tend *to* them and take care *of* them, meet the deeper needs of their heart and give them a home in heaven. Here in America it's more difficult to break through with that message because even though we're in economic down times, and the dollar suffers in its value we're still a wealthy nation by the standards of about 90% of this world. Well, with that we come to Vs 32 of Mark Ch 10, the RYR has walked away, Jesus has sought to teach His disciples a valuable life lesson out of what they just witnessed and beginning in Vs 32 we read.

Vs32-34

We're noting that the closer Jesus *gets* to Jerusalem the more focused He seems to become on *making it* to Jerusalem. We find Jesus "going before them" He's not really walking in a group with His disciples but rather He's out in front of them, focused on the journey before them. It seems as though there was something about His countenance that was perhaps different, He was with drawing a little here and there, He seemed to be contemplating/meditating on something. and He was, the thoughts of the cross were beginning to consume Him, not in an unhealthy way, but the reality of what lie before Him couldn't help but occupy a significant portion of His thoughts. But here's what I want you to see, knowing full well what lie before Him, in what would seem to be just a couple of weeks from this point. Rather than shrink back into obscurity, He *leads the way* going before and refusing to be deterred from the reality that awaits Him. Think about it, if you knew that the single worst and most torturous form of capital punishment ever devised of man was awaiting you in a particular city in just a couple of weeks would you be leading the pack to get there? Yet the bible says of Jesus, "*For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.*" Isa 50:7 There was a determination in Him, He would accomplish the realization of our redemption, and nothing was going to get in His way regardless of the cost. Think about what kind of love that is? It's incomprehensible that Jesus would go through what He did, leaving the ivory palaces of heaven, to become a Man for the sole purpose of being crucified, suffering and dying for the likes of me, and for the likes of you. and Then add to it that He didn't *have* to, He *wanted* to, that kind of love is too high for me, I can't comprehend it, yet it's the Lord, He's resolute in His mission here.

We notice that the disciples were *amazed*, why? Because of His courage, by the time we come to this point in Christ's ministry, I'm telling you the religious "powers that be" in Jerusalem were in open hostility toward Jesus. It was no secret that they were just looking for an opportunity to have Him destroyed, and people knew it. and Yet here He is headed toward the hub, the home base of all these guys and He's *leading the way*, these guys were amazed. and As they followed *they were afraid*. Why? Because there was no doubt a foreboding feeling, an ominous kind of atmosphere, and a particular tension in the air; the spiritual warfare had to be heavy at this point around them; yet Jesus kept pressing on.

So we have a contrast in Jesus' courage and their cowardice. and I think it's something worth considering for just a minute, but not so much in the light of *their* cowardice, let's think

of our own. How often we're afraid to "stand up and stand out" for Jesus for fear of being laughed at, made fun of, or forsaken by a circle of so called "friends." Yet Jesus courageously stood out for us, even leading the way in the face of certain persecution and execution by crucifixion. It's amazing but it seems to hold true that the less persecution a people is faced with, the less bold they become in their commitment to Christ. You would think it would be just the opposite, yet where people are being persecuted, they refuse to be moved in their open confession of Christ.

Yet where persecution isn't a real reality we shrink back and shut up lest we be shamed or embarrassed, laughed at or made fun of because of our identification with Christ.

Now I should say that to their credit, they were afraid, but *they still followed Him*. and Maybe that's you, if you were to take honest inventory of your life you would have to confess that you are a cowardly Christian. You try to fly under the radar as much as you can; let me commend you in this...at least you're following Him. The Lord will encourage you, and strengthen you over time as you lean *on Him* and draw *from Him*, you root yourself *in Him*. The time will come when you find yourself in a place that you would've been cowardly and yet you acted courageous for Christ, you stood up rather than shrinking back and you'll note the work of the Spirit in your life and be further encouraged in that.

Jesus takes His disciples aside again to prepare them for the 3rd and final time for what lies ahead of Him (and them). and with stunning and absolute accuracy Jesus gives them a prophetic play by play of what's going to happen to Him in just a # of days. and Now He tells them not only *what* is going to happen, but *where* it's going to go down...in *Jerusalem*. and He gives them details; an 8-fold prophecy (if you will) of exactly what's to transpire. and Really what this does is reaffirm to us that Jesus wasn't a helpless victim of a tragic circumstance. This was the willful choice of our Sovereign Savior to lay down His life for the sin of the world.

and In case you weren't aware (though time will forbid us to examine the particular passages) it went down precisely as Jesus prophesied. Judas betrayed Him into the hands of the Sanhedrin (chief priests and scribes), they condemned Him to death, but since Roman occupation had taken from them the ability to carry out capital punishment they turned Him over to Rome (the Gentiles). It was the Romans of whom we read, "*When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'*" Matt 27:29 Of course the Jews had their fair share in mocking Him and spitting on Him as well, the Romans scourged Him with the cat of 9 tails and hung Him on the cross, killing Him via crucifixion. and As we all know and rejoice in, on the 3rd day He rose again. None of it happened by chance, it was a carefully calculated plan ordained from before the foundations of the earth that we might be redeemed from our fallen position.

Vs35-37

If we didn't have the written record of this we'd find it difficult to believe that it ever *actually* happened. That Jesus could be this candid, this clear about His coming death and these guys would still have the audacity to come to Jesus in this incredibly self-centered capacity. They're still so convinced that when Jesus gets to Jerusalem that He's going to blow the bondage of Rome right off of Israel, proclaim Himself Messiah and establish His political kingdom that these guys are trying to get dibs in one final time before they get there. Matt's

gospel tells us that they actually employ their mother in this little shindig as well. Their mom was Jesus' mom's sister which means that they were His cousins. Perhaps they were thinking that being family might favor them.

and In one respect we're appalled at the audacity of these guys, yet in another respect we're embarrassed at the transparency with which this demonstrates all of us. They says, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." Well don't we all? We just don't all have the boldness to be that transparent and forthright...Jesus wisely makes them qualify that request; "That depends...what do you want Me to do for you?" "Well, it's a small thing really...we just want the 2 most prominent places in Your administration when You come into the glory of Your kingdom. ;o)"

Vs38-40

Jesus in essence says to them, "You guys still haven't connected the dots between the cross and the crown have you? You're not seeing that suffering precedes glory, and honor comes *after* humility." and He tells them that they should be careful what they ask for lest they get it because they don't really understand the fullness of what they're requesting. He says, "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I'm baptized with?" and It's as if it doesn't even register what He's saying. They just kinda look at each other and say, "Sure, why not?" and Jesus says, "You will, make no mistake; but as for positions of prominence those aren't Mine to give, it'll be given to those for whom it's been prepared."

What is this "cup" that Jesus is talking about, what "baptism" is He referring to? It's sort of a synonymous term in that ultimately He's speaking of the suffering He's about to endure. But the idea of the cup is found in the OT, the wine cup of the wrath of God. and When a people's sin fills up the wine cup of the wrath of God He presses it to their lips and makes them drink it full strength down to and including the dregs. The full fury is poured out in judgment. and Jesus is preparing to drink of the cup of God's judgment, to have the wrath of God poured out upon Him (pressed to His lips) full strength that He might pay the penalty in full for the sin of the world. He'll be "baptized" into death, submerged into death for the sake of your sin and mine. and Though that's the cup He'll taste *specifically*, the baptism He'll experience *personally*, the question He's confronting them with *generally* is, "Are you prepared to suffer and die?"

They don't really get that, they're talking about partaking in what He's partaking in, but they're thinking something totally different. So when Jesus says, "You will drink of the cup, you will experience the baptism," they may've thought "Yes!" In reality what Jesus was prophesying was the fact that they would suffer for the sake of the gospel. James would be the 1st apostle to die for the sake of the gospel, John would be the last. Though church history doesn't record John being specifically martyred it does record him being boiled in a cauldron of oil before being exiled the isle of Patmos where he received the "Revelation." They would both suffer for the sake of the gospel even as Jesus was preparing to, but as for who got what seat... Jesus said that wasn't His prerogative.

Vs41

Why? Because they felt like they'd been undercut by those 2, didn't feel like it was fair for them to try and jockey for the position that *they* wanted. They had yet to attain to **Rom 12:10**, "*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;*" "Hey that's great James, we're pullin for ya John!" It wasn't going like that. **Phil 2:3** says, "*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*" That's not the scene we have here.

Vs42-45

Vs 45 is the heart, and the key Vs to the entire gospel of Mark. The entire book is a record of Jesus' service to others and sacrifice of Himself. But why is it that Vs 42-44 sound so familiar? Oh yeah, because Jesus has told them these things over and over again! That they're trying to perceive the kingdom of God like the way things are ran in the world, it's not that way. In the world the rulers are those who lord their authority over you, exercise their rule in a way that serves their personal agenda. and Jesus is saying it's not that way in the kingdom of God. He says if you want to become great will be your servant and whoever would be 1st will be your slave, will be the one who voluntarily gives up his/her rights or preferences to bless and give way to the preferences of another.

We've mentioned it before, in the kingdom of God greatness isn't measured by how many people *serve you* but rather how many people *you serve*.

Now we shouldn't be confused on the issue of leadership; are leaders to be servants? Yes, but that doesn't take away from their responsibility to lead, to set the standard, carry out the vision and lead lives that others can look to and model their life own after. Think of Jesus; the quintessential leader yet a Servant 2nd to none.

Vs45

The idea being if He's our Master yet He has served us, how much more ought we to serve others? Phil 2:3, we just quoted it; that's the mind of Christ. Doing nothing through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind esteeming others better than Himself. Looking out not for His own interests, but for the interests of others. How so? In humbling Himself and becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. and Where it says that He gave His life as a ransom for *many*, it's an all inclusive word. It's not saying that He didn't die for all, but that He died for more than just the Jews, the Gentiles as well; many people, every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

The bible says, "*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*" **2 Cor 5:21** That's what it means when it says that He gave His life a ransom *for* many. The word "For" speaks of, "in the place of," it speaks of His vicarious death; that He endured what we deserved, He hung there in my place and in your place.

The word "Ransom" we're familiar with. When someone kidnaps a child, or someone dear to us, often times in order to get them back they demand a *ransom*. They will exchange a life for a certain price, they will set a person free if a proper payment is made. and What this is telling us is that Jesus made a proper payment so that we could be set free. We were all held captive under the bondage of sin, and there was a price that needed to be paid if we were to be freed from that captivity...Jesus paid it.

Only the price that He paid, the ransom He gave wasn't a set amount of money; notice it was His very life. He gave His *life* a ransom for many. The bible says, *"...do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."* 1 Cor 6:19-20 You were bought at a price, Jesus purchased you and He paid a price for you, the price of His own blood, His own life poured out for yours, for mine. Peter tells us, *"...you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* 1 Peter 1:18-19

and Now what are we to do, how are we to react or respond to the fact that Jesus laid down His life for us? By standing up and living our lives for Him. Paul exhorts us in the book of Romans, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."* Rom 12:1-2 Or another way to understand that; we're not here to be served, but to serve and to lay down our lives (our wants, our desires) for the sake of others that they might see Christ, or come to know Christ, or perhaps gain a greater understanding of Christ through us.

Vs46-52

So much to be gleaned from this particular passage; the last recorded miracle that Mark gives us in his gospel (oh Jesus will prophesy and he records the ascension, but concerning the healing or moving in another person's life along these lines this is the last one.) The healing of blind Bartimaeus. and It's thought that the reason the reference is given concerning who he is, is because he would become a prominent player in the early church. So as his name is read people realize how the son of Timaeus came to Christ.

Jesus was passing through Jericho (about a day's journey from Jerusalem) with this throng of people all around Him. Being the time of the Passover there were thousands making their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. and As He was passing through there sat a blind man, the Son of Timaeus begging. Hearing all the commotion coming his way he inquired, "What's going on?" Someone said, "Jesus of Nazareth is coming this way!" and No doubt having heard of Him, the miracles He'd performed, the opportunity that was coming upon him and he wasn't going to let it pass by. "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" He just kept shouting it, to the point he was getting on everyone's nerves, people were like, "Shut up man, go back to begging or something." It just egged him on all the more, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Note Vs 49, "So Jesus stood still." There's something that arrests my attention about that phrase, the Son of God stopped everything and stood still so that He could direct His attention toward a desperate cry. Joshua's prayer caused the S-u-n to stand still, Bartimaeus' prayer caused the S-o-n to stand still. and Let me just tell you that in the midst of everything Jesus has going (which is quite a bit) He will always stop to turn His attention to the heartfelt plea of a desperate person. and I love the next phrase, "...and commanded him to be called." This is Christ calling Bartimaeus to Himself... The people said, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you." Listen, this is why you can never let people persuade you in your pursuit of Christ, they'll try and tell you to stop, you're only embarrassing yourself, go back to business as usual. But

Jesus wasn't about to pass by this man who was crying out to Him. and He never will, if your life is filled with darkness, you know you're spiritually destitute, a beggar in your soul, and you're desperate for more than this life has to offer, your cry will equal His call.

Notice he threw aside his garment (that which covered him, his own works, his own efforts, his own ways) and *came to Jesus*. Jesus said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" Wow! Think that through, what is it that you *really want* Jesus to do for you? Jesus has heard his plea *generally*, "have mercy on me!" That's a general plea, he knew he wasn't in a place of personal righteousness, he didn't talk about how unfair things were, that he deserved a better shake, or lot in life. He said, "I need mercy." But Jesus presses him further, "What do you want Me to do for you *specifically*." The bible tells us that we're to let our requests be made known to God, by prayer and with thanksgiving. Sometimes we pray things generally, but if there's something you're seeking specifically don't be afraid to set that supplication before the Lord.

The blind man says, "Rabboni, (which is a strengthened form of the word Rabbi, it means "my master") that I may receive my sight." Jesus said, "Go your way, your faith has made you well." and Notice when he received his sight what did he do? He followed Jesus, when he could finally see clearly his way was the Lord's way, He followed Jesus.

What a picture this is of all of us, once blind, beggars, spiritually destitute with no way to in any way change our situation. Then Jesus came along, He heard our cry and opened our eyes...and now we follow Him, it's suddenly so clear; He's our Savior, our Redeemer, and giving His life for us, we want to live our lives for Him.

Maybe you're in a place where you feel like you've been in the dark; you've been crying out to God, just asking Him to somehow help you, if He's out there to do something, just make Himself real to you to show you...Be of good cheer. Rise, He's calling you today. Right here, right now, and in this moment. He's turned His attention toward you, what will you do?

Bartimaeus could've gotten embarrassed, could've been like, "I'm not coming to Jesus in front of all those people, I was hoping we could work something out in private, not in public."

Jesus calls people publicly, He died for us publicly, and He expects that we name and live for Him publicly. Bartimaeus didn't care who was there, what people thought or anything else, he threw his garment, his self-sufficiency aside, rose up and came to Jesus just as fast as he could.

What do you want from Jesus? Do you want to see clearly? Do you want to receive your sight? Let me tell you He can open your eyes, trust Him for it, your faith won't save you, Jesus saves, but faith is the means through which the saving grace of Jesus Christ flows into your life. Cry out *to Him*, be transparent *before Him*, "God I need Your mercy *generally*, but here's my need *specifically*, I need to see clearly, I need Your saving grace at work *in me*. Oh that we would all emulate Bartimaeus. He recognized his inability, trusted Jesus as the One to give him God's gracious mercy, and when he could "see" clearly he followed Jesus.

You've got His attention, now what do you want Him to do?

Prayer Points:

Lord that we might receive our sight, that we might see more and more clearly everyday who You are, Your love, selfless service and sacrifice on our behalf. That we might follow *after* You and lay down our lives *for* You and Your glory. That we might resist the temptation to seek positions of prominence and simply seek to serve others even as You didn't come to be served but to serve and to give Your life away for the sake of others, for us. and May you infuse us with fresh boldness, courage Lord to be witnesses to You, I pray Lord for any who may be in that cowardly kind of commitment to You that today might be the day when all that changes. That by the Power of Your Spirit even as You were bold in Your commitment to us, that we might be bold in our commitment to You. That You might help us to show and share You even this week with someone else who needs to know You.

and Maybe that's you right here right now, you have a need in your life and that's to know Jesus Christ You know you've been blind, caught up and taken captive by sin. Today Jesus can set you free, He can open your eyes, He's passing (as it were) through our midst, and as He stands still and turns His attention toward you, He's calling out to you, will you cast aside your self sufficiency and come to Him?