



The Side of the Road

By: Brian Baer

Mark 10:46

It is no secret that evangelism involves much traveling. We do not discriminate against any church. If we are invited and it works out with our schedules, we will make the trip. Since we do travel many road miles, we take necessary precautions to make sure our vehicle has all the required maintenance - oil change, tire rotation, fluid check, etc. However, even though we may have the maintenance up to date, it does not exempt us from things happening. We could easily run over a nail. We may get some bad gasoline. Therefore circumstances out of our control may force us to the side of the road. The same can be said concerning life as a Christian. We can read our Bible, pray and go to church, but it does not exempt us from life! We can face tribulations that shake us up causing us to pull over to the side of the road. Such was the case with Bartimeus.

Jesus was coming out of Jerusalem with His disciples and a great multitude of people. We do know that Jesus only made one trip to Jericho and that He was successful. In Jericho, Jesus met a man named Zacheus. Although the text does not mention Zacheus, we can perceive that they had a revival in Jericho, because of the great multitude who followed Jesus. This may not be theologically correct, but when I get to Heaven, I would love to hear Jesus preach. Imagine a man holding people's attention so long that they forget to eat.

However, Jesus was no ordinary preacher. He was the anointed Son of God. He was effective because He was anointed. You may not be an evangelist, pastor, or Sunday School teacher, but if you are anointed you will be effective. Picture the scene of the text. Jesus was with this great multitude of people and just a few feet away sits Bartimeus on the side of the road. Let's notice a few things about Bartimeus:

Stuck on The Highway

The highway is different than a backroad. On the highway you meet fearless people who drive uncontrollably. If you ever get stuck on the highway, people will just speed by you without a second thought. Imagine Bartimeus' daily routine: Stuck on the highway with people walking by with no thought of helping him. He realizes if he were not stuck, he could be a lot further in life. Are you stuck on the highway? Maybe circumstances have left you stuck and every day people speed by you only thinking of themselves. Their speed mocks you and makes you regret being stuck on the highway. You could have been a lot further in your spiritual life. However, the grim reality is -- you're stuck. Bartimeus had been there so long that he made a living out of being stuck. He was a beggar living off the leftovers of others. I wonder how many people in our churches have been stuck so long, they have settled for second best. They have no intention of getting better. Those type of people love to stay in the hospital. They measure the love of people by the amount of cards or flowers they receive. They crave attention like dry ground craves water. I have seen many times how good people can fall prey to routine. Their life turns into a tire in the mud, spinning but not progressing!

Not only was Bartimeus stuck, but he could not see. Blindness is dealt with more frequently in the Bible than any other infirmity. I believe the reason is because we have to blindly face most situations in life. Unlike God, we cannot see what the future will bring. We go through circumstances blinded to the outcome. Jesus was trying to relate that at times we may find ourselves blind and stuck on the highway.

Sense of Hearing

“And when he heard...” Although Bartimeus was blind, Christ used what Bartimeus had. Praise the Lord! I am glad God does not have to use what I have lost to bless me. He uses what I have left. I can remember in my life when I was sitting on the highway, blinded by sin. There seemed to be no hope for my condition - but I heard.

Because Bartimeus heard about Jesus before Jesus got to him, Christ must have been traveling with a noisy crowd. How will the world hear about Jesus if we do not tell people about Him. We are commanded by God to praise Him! In fact, let me share with you a blessed thought. When God’s people needed a great victory over their enemy, many times God would have someone present from the tribe of Judah. Judah, which literally means “praise,” was the son of Rachel. Genesis states that Judah was there when his brother Joseph was almost murdered by his brothers. Judah stepped in and saved his life. So, in essence, praise can keep you alive! One of the greatest praise leaders in the Word of God was also from the tribe of Judah. David, who wrote much of the book of Psalms, won many battles in his life because he was born with praise inside of him.

As we look into the New Testament, we discover when God needed victory over the battle of sin, He sent “the Lion of the Tribe of Judah,” Jesus Christ. God did not leave us out. The Word also tells us the blessings of Abraham are now upon us because we have been grafted into the family through Jesus’ death on the cross. Therefore, by right, we are *“A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light”* (1 Peter 2:9). The world is not ashamed to tell us their opinions. Subsequently, we should stand bold and unashamed and proclaim the good news of the Gospel to those who are blinded by sin.

Spoke What He Heard

“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” Bartimeus heard about Jesus, but it was not enough just to hear about Him. The Bible also says, *“Faith without works is dead”* (James 2:20). He had to take action in order for Christ to heal him. There are millions of people who hear about Christ on a weekly, sometimes daily basis. What separates them from those who have victory is the victorious have called out to God. They have put their faith in action. I believe Bartimeus realized that Jesus was not going to set up residence along the highway. The crowd was getting closer and soon Jesus would PASS by! We know from Scripture Jesus only made one trip to Jericho.

If Bartimeus had not called on Jesus, he would have never been healed. Christ will not stay where He is not wanted. You must call out to Him. Even though Jesus was traveling with a noisy crowd, He still heard the cry of a blind man. He stopped and touched Bartimeus’ eyes. I am thankful for the day when I cried to Jesus, He stopped and came to me and removed the scales of sin from my heart and gave me brand new life. You may have 20/20 vision but still be blind. Call out to God and let Him give you a new start. You have heard about Him. Now it is time to do something about what you have heard. Remember this may be the last time Jesus will pass by!

