

Mark 10:46-52, Bartimaeus
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A. Overview

1. Tell the story of Bartimaeus.
2. Recall that 8:27-10:52 is structured as two chiasms:
 - a) 8:27-9:13
 - 1) Almost entirely with the Twelve (except for center, 8:34-9:1)
 - 2) Emphasis is on the Cost of Discipleship.
 - b) 9:14-10:52
 - 1) Five episodes deal directly with people beyond the circle of the Twelve
 - 2) Emphasis is on the need for Faith and the simplicity of salvation
 - c) Review the chiastic structure of 9:14-10:52, which we have not yet considered in detail.
3. Then see how this elucidates the story of blind Bartimaeus.

B. 10:46-52, the Healing of Bartimaeus

1. 46, Bartimaeus' condition: a blind beggar; helpless, worthless to society.
2. 48-49, Bartimaeus' opposition
 - a) The fact: the multitude is usually not interested in the spiritual profit of an individual. We can expect opposition from the crowd if we seek to please the Lord.
 - b) The crowd's attitude:
 - 1) We most naturally expect such opposition from those opposed to the Lord, but here it is a crowd of enthusiastic supporters!
 - 2) They are more concerned with an antiseptic "spiritual experience" than with meeting this poor man's physical and spiritual need. Maybe they don't want their nice neat church fellowship muddied up with a dirty beggar.
 - 3) *Application:* Beware organized religious movements that have enough structure of their own to carry people along independent of the moving of the HS.
 - c) Bartimaeus' attitude: His persistence in seeking the Lord.
 - 1) Those who have felt the sting of their sin do not need to be persuaded to come to Christ; they will force their way through the opposition of the crowd.
 - 2) *Application:* We must make the Lord known, but peoples'

salvation does not depend on the cleverness of our arguments. If you have to persuade someone that they are a believer, they almost certainly aren't.

- d) The Lord's attitude: he hears the cry of the needy, no matter how others may seek to stifle it, and is always ready to save.

3. 47-52, Bartimaeus' preparation

- a) 47, 48, knows the one on whom he calls. Calls on Jesus as "Son of David," acknowledging him as Messiah. He is the only one in Mark (other than the Lord himself) to use this title. The multitudes apparently believe that the Lord is the Messiah, but they (like the disciples) are seeking advancement; he is seeking mercy.
- b) 50, knows the cost. Leaves his garment behind. All that he has; but whatever is gain for him, he counts loss for Christ.
- c) 51, knows his need. Not a vague "follow Jesus because it's the 'in' thing to do," but a clear sense of need and a desire to have it fixed. Why repentance must precede faith.
- d) 52, knows his duty. Contrast "go thy way" with "followed him in the way." His way has become the way of the Lord Jesus. In fact, memory of his name ("Bartimaeus") suggests that he did indeed become a part of the early community of believers (and may explain why Mark focuses on this single individual, even though, according to Matthew, there were actually two).

C. The Chiasm of 9:14-10:52

Focuses on the need for faith and the simplicity of salvation.

- 1. Begins and ends with a healing that depends on faith
 - a) 9:14-29, Healing & Faith: Demoniac Boy and his Father
 - b) 10:46-52, Healing & Faith: Bartimaeus
- 2. Then an alternation between announcement of the passion and the disciples' failure to appreciate the cost (application of the lesson from the initial chiasm)
 - a) 9:30-32, Second Announcement of his Passion
 - b) 9:33-50, Inappropriate Response: Who shall be first?
 - c) 10:32-34, Third Announcement of his Passion
 - d) 10:35-45, Inappropriate Response: James and John
- 3. In the center, 10:1-31, three encounters by the way, illustrating the soils once again, with the good soil in the middle, the simple faith of children.

D. How the Chiasm Elucidates the Story of Bartimaeus

- 1. Contrasts with the Demoniac Son enhance the status of Bartimaeus.
 - a) Address: "Son of David" (acknowledging his Messianic role) rather than "Master," "Teacher," 9:17, which only later turns

- to "Lord," 9:24.
- b) The father in ch.9 was apparently being used by the scribes, who brought him forward to test the Lord. The crowds resist the blind man as he seeks access to the Lord.
 - c) Remembered by name; suggests ongoing association with the church.
2. Note similarities with the Demoniac Son (at the other extreme of the chiasm) and the Blessing of the Children (at the middle); example of Lund's Third Law.
- a) With Blessing of Children: discouraged by the immediate circle of disciples.
 - b) With Demoniac Son: emphasis on need for Faith (9:19, 23, 24)
 - c) The earlier two are similar with one another, and contrast with this, in having the parents bring the needy ones.
3. Yet all three of these points are balanced in all three.
- a) Need for faith is implied in the Blessing of the Children, though the word itself is not used, in 10:15, receiving the kingdom of God like a little child. *Application:* This is the foundation, the essential qualification for coming to the Lord. It is essentially an individual transaction. Yet, the other two points of comparison consider the impact of others on our faith.
 - b) Discouragement by the disciples is not explicit in the Demoniac Son, but their failure to cast out the demon plays a similar role. *Application:* We must be very careful not to turn people away from the Lord.
 - c) The blind man takes his own initiative, unlike the children of the first two cases, but even here the crowd calls him to come to Jesus. *Application:* This is the other side of the coin with regard to the first comparison. While salvation is individual, we can and should help others come to Christ. Parents and children are the most natural case, but evangelism more broadly falls into this category.

Analysis

- A. 10:46-52, Healing & Faith: Bartimaeus
 Pushed away like children; saved by faith
1. * 46 Kai\ e)/rxontai ei)s)Ierixw/.
 2. kai\ e)kporeuome/nou au)tou^ a)po\)Ierixw\ kai\ tw^ n maqhtw^ n au)tou^ kai\ o)/xlou i(kanou^ ui(o\s Timai/ou Bartimai^os (o tuflo\s e)ka/qhto para\ th\ n o(do/n prosai/twn
 3. 47 kai\ a)kou/sas o(/ti)Ihsou^ s o(Nazarthno/s e)stin h)/rcato kra/zein kai\ le/gein,
 - a) Ui(e\ Dauid)Ihsou^ ,
 - b) e)le/hso/n me.

4. * 48 kai\ e)peti/mwn au)tw^| polloi\ i(/na siwph/sh|:
5. * o(de\ pollw^| ma^llon e)/krazen,
a) Ui(e\ Dau/d,
b) e)le/hso/n me.
6. 49 kai\ sta\s o()Ihsou^s ei)^pen,
a) Fwnh/sate au)to/n.
7. * kai\ fwnou^sin to\n tuflo\n le/gontes au)tw^|,
a) Qa/rsei,
b) e)/geire,
c) fwnei^ se.
8. 50 o(de\ a)pobalw\n to\ i(ma/tion au)tou^ a)naphdh/sas h)^lqen
pro\s to\n)Ihsou^n.
9. 51 kai\ a)pokriqei\s au)tw^| o()Ihsou^s ei)^pen,
a) Ti/ soi qe/leis poih/sw;
10. * o(de\ tuflo\s ei)^pen au)tw^|,
a) Rabbouni,
b) i(/na a)nable/yw.
11. * 52 kai\ o()Ihsou^s ei)^pen au)tw^|,
a) (/Upage,
b) h(pi/stis sou se/swke/n se.
12. * kai\ eu)qu\s a)ne/bleyen,
13. * kai\ h)kolou/qei au)tw^| e)n th^| o(dw^|.