

THE STEPS IN GETTING HELP: BLIND BARTIMAEUS MARK 10:46–52

Introduction

This is the picture of a man's needing help and needing it desperately. As we read the story, there is no question but that the man's blindness is a picture of the blindness, darkness, and needs of a world that reels in desperation for help. The need may be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual; it may be some problem with the mind, some desperate loneliness or some tragic sin. Whatever it is, this passage spells out the steps for getting help.

- I. Step 1: having Jesus available to help (v. 46).
- II. Step 2: believing the reports about Jesus (v. 47).
- III. Step 3: acknowledging personal need (v. 47).
- IV. Step 4: enduring, persevering after Jesus (v. 48).
- V. Step 5: eagerly expecting to receive Jesus' help (vv. 49-50).
- VI. Step 6: requesting precisely what is needed (vv. 51-52).
- VII. Step 7: experiencing the power of Jesus and following Him (v. 52).

I. *Mark 10:46 The Blind Bartimaeus of Jericho*

Jesus had been in Jericho (how long we do not know). In the days of Jesus, Jericho was one of the most important cities of Palestine. One of the world's main commercial roads ran right through the city north to south. The city was only about seventeen miles from Jerusalem, and it is thought to be the oldest city in the world.

It was the Passover season, which means that thousands of pilgrims were making their way to Jerusalem. The pilgrims were passing right through Jericho. Blind Bartimaeus knew this, and he also knew that religious people were more sensitive to the needs of helpless people who had to beg for a living. It is also possible that Bartimaeus had heard that Jesus was in Jericho (see Luke 18:35-43). If so, he knew that his best chance to find Jesus would be to station himself at the city limits where Jesus would be passing as He left the city. Whatever the case, Bartimaeus had to beg for a living, so he "was sitting by the roadside....begging".

Thought 1. A man must go where he knows Jesus is, where Jesus "passes by." A man must go where he can hear Jesus or he may miss the chance of eternal life.

Isa 55:6 *Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.*

Luke 11:10 *"For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*

II. *Mark 10:47* **Belief in Jesus Christ**

The first step to getting help is believing the reports about Jesus. Sitting there, Bartimaeus heard all kinds of noises coming from the people passing by — the noise of individuals, of groups, of whole caravans. He heard the noise of feet tramping along, of animals, of conversation, of laughter, of play among children. He heard all kinds of talking: serious, jovial, commercial, vain, rude, off-coloured, religious. But then something happened: the size of the crowd and the noise and talk changed. The passers-by became a throng, a crowd of people; and the noise and talk were about Jesus, the One for whom he had hoped and longed.

Bartimaeus had been blind for years, maybe for life, with no hope of ever seeing. Apparently he was a beggar with no one to care for him. But then the most glorious event of his life happened. He heard about One called Jesus of Nazareth who was claiming to be the true Messiah. For the first time in his life, hope swelled up in him. He knew there was a possibility that he might be healed and enabled to see. From the very first day that he had heard about Jesus, he had hoped and longed for the chance when Jesus might pass by. Why? Because he *believed the testimonies* about Jesus.

Note another fact. Sitting there by the road as Jesus passed by, he had no way to know it was Jesus. He could not see Him. He could only hear people walking and talking. When he heard people talking about Jesus, he believed it was He. He believed and trusted what he was hearing.

Thought 1. A man must believe the report, the testimony about Jesus. All Bartimaeus ever had was what he heard. He had never seen or been around Jesus. He only knew the testimony people were sharing: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of David. And he believed the testimony.

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

John 20:31 *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

Rom 10:9-10 *That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

Isa 53:1 *Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*

Isa 61:1-2 *The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.*

III. *Mark 10:47 Public Profession and Cry for Mercy*

The second step to getting help is acknowledging personal need. As soon as Bartimaeus heard that it was Jesus, he instantly began shouting out to attract Jesus, creating as much fuss and noise as he could above the crowd and its noise.

The point is this: Bartimaeus acknowledged his need, and he confessed it publicly. He did not approach Jesus secretly or quietly by asking someone close by to appeal to Jesus on his behalf. He had a desperate need and he accepted the fact. He wanted the help of Jesus no matter what. Note two facts.

1. He shouted to the “Son of David.” This was an inadequate concept of Jesus. But Bartimaeus approached Jesus as his hope, his saviour, his deliverer, his leader. He used what knowledge he had of Jesus and shouted to Him.

Thought 1. No man has an adequate concept of Jesus when he first comes to Jesus. No man understands Jesus until after he is saved and has received the Holy Spirit into his life and learned of Christ.

2. He shouted for mercy, not for anything else. He was blind and he was a beggar, yet he did not cry for housing or clothing or food. He cried for his most basic need to be met — for mercy.

Luke 18:13-14 “*But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*”

2 Cor 7:10 *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

Psa 34:6 *This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.*

Psa 34:18 *The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

Psa 38:9 *All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you.*

Psa 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

Psa 61:2 *From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

Isa 66:2 “*Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?*” declares the Lord. “*This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.*”

Joel 2:13 *Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.*

IV. *Mark 10:48 Enduring and Persevering after Jesus*

The third step to getting help is persisting and persevering after Jesus. Many among the crowd tried to hush Bartimaeus, but he was desperate and determined and in dead earnest. He would not be discouraged, silenced or stopped. He repeatedly cried to the top of his lungs: “Son of David, have mercy on me.”

The point is that Bartimaeus persevered. He had need, and he would not stop seeking to have his need met. Note the voices raised against him, and they were “many.” His faith in Jesus was strong. He believed Jesus could really help him. His faith stood against all the voices of *discouragement* and against the feelings of so many that it was *useless*.

Thought 1. Perseverance is the answer to desperate need — persevering prayer and persevering faith (See *Persevering Prayer*, Mt. 7:7; *Prayer and Fellowship*, Mt. 7:8).

Mat 7:8 “For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”

Deu 4:29 But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Jer 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Thought 2. Worldly voices will rise up against us, attempting...

- To pull us away
- To tell us all is useless
- To convince us that our need is too desperate to be met
- to encourage us to try the world’s way

MATHEW 07:07 PERSEVERING PRAYER

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” **Mathew 07:07**

There is a difference between the words ask, seek, and knock.

1. The word “ask” says the following.
 - a. We ask when there is a need or want.
 - b. We ask when there is someone who has plenty and who can give what we need or want.
2. The word “seek” says the following.
 - a. We seek when we need or want something of value.
 - b. We seek when we ourselves are responsible for finding what we need or want.

3. The word “knock” says the following.
 - a. We knock when we are shut out and need or want entrance.
 - b. We knock when there is someone on the other side who can open to us.

Note: Christ says our prayers are answered. We receive and find, and the door is opened to us. □

MATHEW 07:08 PRAYER AND FELLOWSHIP

*“For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.” **Mathew 07:08***

Why does God not always answer our prayers immediately? Why is it necessary to ask and seek and knock and to keep on asking and seeking and knocking? Why do we need to ask at all when God knows our needs even before we ask?

There are at least four reasons.

1. Prayer teaches us to communicate and fellowship with God and to trust and seek God more and more. When God holds back the giving, we keep coming to talk and share with Him more and more. Just as a human father longs for our fellowship, our heavenly Father longs for our fellowship.
2. Prayer teaches us both patience and hope in God and His promises. When God does not give immediately, we patiently (enduringly) keep coming into His presence, waiting and hoping in what He has promised us (Mat 21:22; John 14:26; 1 John 5:14-15).
3. Prayer teaches us to love God as our Father more and more. Knowing that God is going to answer our prayer and having to wait on the answer causes us to draw closer and closer to God and His gifts. Then when the prayer is answered, our hearts are endeared to Him much more than before.
4. Prayer demonstrates how deeply we trust God and how much we love and depend upon Him. A person who really trusts God — who really knows he is going to receive what he has asked — will bring more and more concern to God. He will come to God in prayer more and more. But the person who is not quite sure about receiving will only occasionally come, usually only in emergencies. God easily sees how much we love and trust Him by our prayer life. □

MARK 10:48 PERSISTENCE, PERSEVERANCE

Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **Mark 10:48**

Persistence always grabs the Lord's attention. Note Jesus' question. He already knew what the blind man wanted. He had probably heard him as well, but He wanted the blind man to experience persistence. Why does Christ teach perseverance instead of just meeting our needs immediately? There are at least five reasons.

1. Having to persevere sharpens, increases, and grows our faith. It teaches endurance, experience (victorious living), and hope (Rom 5:2-4).
2. Having to persevere sharpens and makes us more aware of our minds. It gives us more time for thought and meditation and for the searching of the truth about ourselves and our needs. It focuses in on real needs.
3. Having to persevere teaches us to pray and to seek God more. It creates more awareness of our helplessness and our need for His presence and help. It necessitates more fellowship and deep communion with Him.
4. Having to persevere gives us more part in His work and worship. It creates a sense within us of having a greater part. This is not a need on God's part, but a need on our part. Serving Him is a great privilege which He allows us.
5. Having to persevere allows more time for a greater number of people to be reached with God's power. Perseverance is a greater witness for God. When God answers and moves, more people are aroused to observe God's working. □

V. *Mark 10:49–50 Eager Expectation to Receive Help from Jesus*

The fourth step to getting help is eagerly expecting to receive Jesus' help. There are two significant acts in this point.

1. "Jesus *stopped*." The crowd must have been huge. Jesus had to send for the man. Jesus stopped and *stood still*...
 - because of the man's need. He could not reach Jesus by himself.
 - because the man had persisted in crying despite many opposing him (see *Persistence, Perseverance*, Mark 10:48).
 - because Jesus never turned away from a man who cried for help.

John 6:37 "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away."

2 Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2. The man threw aside his cloak, cast aside all impediments. This was an interesting act. Bartimaeus wanted nothing to hinder him from reaching Jesus as quickly as he could. All in one motion, he threw aside the hindrances, sprang to his feet (ana pedesas), and moved toward Jesus. The stress is on his eagerness to reach Jesus and allowing nothing to hinder him.

Thought 1. What a lesson for us! How few are so eager! How many hang on to that which hinders and hampers and keeps them from reaching Christ?

Eph 4:22 *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.*

Heb 12:1 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

1 Pet 2:11 *Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.*

Job 11:14 *If you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent.*

Isa 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

VI. Mark 10:51–52 Requesting Precisely What is Needed

The fifth step to getting help is requesting precisely what is needed. Note several facts.

1. Bartimaeus knew exactly what he needed and had no difficulty stating his need. He did not waver at all. He was not like many who are vague in their prayers and requests. He had examined himself and knew precisely what he needed.

Mat 21:22 *“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”*

John 14:13-14 *“And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”*

John 16:24 *“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*

Isa 65:24 *Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.*

Jer 33:3 *‘Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.’*

2. Bartimaeus needed, however, to make a personal confession to Jesus. Jesus, of course, knew what Bartimaeus needed; but the Lord’s knowing about the man’s need was not enough. The man had to make a personal confession to Jesus.

Mat 10:32-33 *“Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.”*

3. Bartimaeus needed to confess his faith in Jesus' power for the sake of the others standing there. They needed to know that it was faith in Jesus that saved a man.

Rom 10:9-10 *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

Rom 10:13 *For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

4. The word for Rabbi (**Rabboni**) means *my Master*. It is a title of reverent respect. Note the possessive "my." Bartimaeus' heart reached out to Jesus, desiring to belong to Him.

Luke 9:23 *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*

5. A specific request got a specific answer: "Your faith has healed you" (See *Faith*, Heb 11:6).

Heb 7:25 *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.*

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

Psa 37:5 *Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this.*

Prov 3:5 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.*

Isa 26:4 *Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.*

VII. **Mark 10:52** *Discipleship, Following Jesus*

The sixth step to getting help is following Jesus. This was a very tender scene. Note what Jesus had told Bartimaeus, "Go." But Bartimaeus did not go, not after his Master had touched him. Bartimaeus clung to Jesus. Nothing was going to pry him away. He "followed Jesus along the way."

Thought 1. There are several lessons here.

- 1) There is a heart of appreciation, of being grateful and thankful.

Col 1:12 *Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.*

Col 3:15 *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

Deu 8:10 *When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.*

- 2) There is the idea of genuineness of conversion. He followed through.

Luke 9:23 *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*

- 3) There is the idea of growing, wanting to learn more and more about this Saviour of men.

Mat 11:28-30 *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke [service and discipleship] upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

- 4) There is the testimony of loyalty and faithfulness.

1 Cor 15:58 *Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain. ■*