

Matthew 20:29-34: And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. ³⁰ And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³¹ The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³² And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³³ They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." ³⁴ And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

Intro: This healing we see today is a perfect picture of what we should have learned in the past few weeks. Unlike the self-righteous RYR, & unlike Jesus' disciples who seek the greatest position, these blind, poor beggars are utterly helpless. Like a child, all they can do is cry & hope. It's impossible for them to help themselves – they must hope in Jesus. In Jesus, they find all they need & more. In begging & crying out – they have died to self – died to their reputations – died to their desire to be thought well of by others – totally dead. They trust Jesus with a humble faith – they're desperate for Christ! & they are healed, saved, & follow Jesus! Last week, we saw Jesus teach that suffering & sacrifice must come before honor, & true greatness is found in humbly serving others, even as Jesus did, when He gave the ultimate example of service: His death on that cross. Today, we see Jesus serve others again!

Today we see Jesus, through both His power & compassion, demonstrate that He is the God-Man Messiah Who came to open blind eyes & destroy sin & its effects, so that we might be with Him where there's fullness of joy!

1. The Crowd And The Two

Matthew 20:29-31: And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. ³⁰ And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³¹ The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"

a. The crowd: Great crowds gathered around Jesus & followed Him because He taught like no man ever taught; He was doing great miracles; He fed the people bread & they were filled; & He was healing their sick. But the sad thing is, it doesn't seem like the crowds are following Jesus as true followers but merely as fans (Book: Be A Follower, Not A Fan). They are not modeling the compassion of Jesus, because when these two blind men cry out to Jesus for mercy, the crowd rebukes them & tells them to be silent.

This crowd probably thought of these men as cursed by God: under God's judgment for their personal sin: **John 9:2-3:** His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

The law did not allow the blind to be priests – they could not draw near to God to sacrifice: **Leviticus 21:17-19:** For the generations to come none of your descendants who has a defect may come near to offer the food of his God. No man who has any defect may come near: no man who is blind or lame

These men would have been viewed as total outcasts, cursed by God, & forgotten. But true followers of Jesus will grow to be more & more like Him, imitating His love & compassion. May we never be like this crowd & discourage anyone from ever crying out to Jesus! May we bring people to Jesus! Jesus doesn't forget these men!

b. The two: We see two men in our passage today who seemed to be left out. They are not a part of the crowd. They are on the roadside. They are blind. They are crying out to Jesus for help. & they are rebuked by the crowd. & yet Jesus cares for the two. Jesus doesn't just care about the crowds, He cares about the two. His eye is on you!

Hymn: Why should I feel discouraged; Why should the shadows come; Why should my heart be lonely;
And long for heav'n and home; When Jesus is my portion; My constant Friend is He;
His eye is on the sparrow; And I know He watches me; His eye is on the sparrow; And I know He watches me!

Jesus goes after the one lost sheep! He cares about the one or two! **Luke 15:7:** Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

c. There is great mercy when you are remembered by Jesus Who is all in all:

- **Nehemiah 13:31:** Remember me, O my God, for good.
- **David: Psalm 25:6-7:** Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old . . . according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!
- **Jeremiah 15:15:** O LORD, you know; remember me and visit me
- **The thief on the cross: Luke 23:42-43:** "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

No matter how small, nameless, blind, poor, needy, & helpless you are this morning – Jesus will remember you!

d. The need of the two: They know they're needy! They're blind, they can't see. Shut your eyes & imagine: that's all you'll ever see: darkness, nothing. **Doriani:** Jesus gives sight to the blind more often than any other miracle.

Giving sight to the blind was never done in the Old Testament nor has it ever been done after Jesus' ministry.

Blindness is such a powerful illustration of need that God uses this very language of opening blind eyes to describe what must happen to lost sinners when Jesus spoke to Paul at his conversion & gave him his commission:

Acts 26:17-18: I am sending you **to open their eyes**, so that they may turn from darkness to light & from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins & a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. [Unbelievers here today, do you see your need? Do you realize you are spiritually blind?] **GOSPEL!**

2. The Cry Of The Two

Matthew 20:30-31: And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³¹ The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"

a. These blind men cry out to the right Person: They cry out to the only One Who has ever made the blind to see! Jesus is the only One Who can grant these men sight. And He's the only One Who can save us from our sins.

- **John 14:6:** I am the way, & the truth, & the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- **Acts 4:12:** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.
- **1 John 5:12:** Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

b. These blind men call Jesus: LORD: These two blind men call Jesus "Lord" three times! It is true that this expression can simply mean a polite "Sir", but I think these men mean more than merely "Sir". I think they know more about Jesus than that He is a mere "Sir". They may know that He is LORD, like Thomas knew! And whether they knew or not, He IS! Jesus is LORD! Jesus is God!

- **John 20:28:** Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"
- **Exodus 4:10-11:** But Moses said to the LORD, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue." ¹¹ Then the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? **Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind?** Is it not I, the LORD?"
- **Psalm 146:8:** the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

c. These blind men cry out: "Have mercy on us!": Mercy is getting what you don't deserve. Mercy is not getting what you deserve. They are crying out: "Please show us love & compassion & kindness & heal us!" They knew they needed mercy, & they could not help themselves!

Charles Spurgeon: Have enough faith, dear reader, to believe that you need mercy. Mercy is not for those who think they have merited it. Such people seek justice, not mercy. Only the guilty need and seek mercy. Believe that God delights in mercy, delights to give grace where it cannot be deserved, delights to forgive where there is no reason for forgiveness but His own goodness. Believe also that the Lord Jesus Christ is the incarnation of mercy. His very existence is mercy to you. His every word means mercy. His life, His death, His intercession in heaven, all mean mercy, mercy, mercy, nothing but mercy. You need Divine mercy and Jesus is the embodiment of Divine mercy - He is the Savior for you! Believe in Him and the mercy of God is yours!

In the Old Testament, you cried to God for mercy: Psalm 123:2-3: Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us

Psalm 147:11: The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy . . .

These blind men cry to Jesus for mercy! Jesus is God!

d. These blind men call Jesus the Son of David: This is a name for the Messiah Who would come to save His people! These blind men believe (they see!) that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior, the Christ, the King!

- **2 Samuel 7:12-13:** When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

- **Acts 2:30-32:** Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.

e. When these blind men are rebuked to be silent by the crowd, they cry out all the more: When they face obstacles & hardship, they keep coming, & they come all the more: they come repeatedly & harder & louder!

Jacob: Genesis 32:26: I will not let you go unless you bless me.

Luke 18:1, 5: he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray & not lose heart . . . ⁵ “yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.”

Syro-Phoenician Woman: Told to go away; Ignored; Said He’s not sent for her; It wasn’t good to help her; dog!

Do you pursue the Lord Jesus Christ this way in the face of loss, pain, suffering, & all manner of obstacles? Do it!

3. A Merciful Encounter With Jesus

Matthew 20:32-34: And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³³ They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." ³⁴ And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

a. Jesus stops: James Edwards: How remarkable that the Son of Man allows the cries of a poor and powerless person to stop Him in His tracks!

Jesus stops b/c He’s gracious & merciful, compassionate & loving, & He cares about the most helpless! Jesus is the King of mercy! He’s the King of pity! He’s the King of kindness! He’s the King of compassion! He’s the King of love! Jesus asks the same question he asked James, John, & their mother: “What do you want me to do for you?”

b. Jesus cares about what they want: Jesus asks them what they want Him to do for them! Jesus does care about what we want, but He always knows what we ought to want (pray the Bible), & He often doesn’t settle on giving us what we want, but He always gives us what is best for us. **(Romans 8:28)**

Richard Ellis: The life that you have now is the life that you would pray for . . . if you had the wisdom of God.

Pour out your deepest longings & desires to Jesus! Ask Him for what you want! Trust Him to give you what is best! And pray that He changes your deepest longings & desires to align with His good, pleasing, & perfect will!

c. Jesus has pity on them: Verses 33-34: "Lord, let our eyes be opened." ³⁴ And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight

Jesus has pity; Jesus has compassion; Jesus loves these men, & He cares about them. He even cares about their physical needs & temporary sufferings! Jesus has pity, compassion, love, & care for you as well!

Dane Ortlund: Nothing can touch you that does not touch [Christ]. To get to you, every pain, every assault, every disappointment has to go through Him. You are shielded by invincible love. He Himself feels your anguish even more deeply than you do, because you're one with Him; and He mediates everything hard in your life through His love for you, because you're one with Him.

Matthew 11:28-30: Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

d. Jesus causes the blind to see: Verse 34: and immediately they recovered their sight

- **Isaiah 29:18:** In that day . . . out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see.

- **Isaiah 35:4-5:** Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come & save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened

- **Hymn (Joy To The World):** No more let sins & sorrows grow; Nor blind men cry for sight!
He comes to make; His blessings flow; far as the curse is found!

May God allow us to see & feel God's mercy like these blind men!

John Piper: So when you go home each week from these messages, be stunned that you are a beneficiary of mercy, be reminded & stunned that you & I deserve nothing but wrath from God, & in Christ receive nothing but mercy from Him. Be stunned. & then pray that God would make you merciful to the undeserving. Oh, how sweet marriages would be if we stopped thinking about what we deserve & thought more about how to show more mercy – how to do more undeserved good to each other. Oh, how sweet would be the fellowship of the church if we all really felt undeserving of any good & lavished with God's mercy. And, oh, how bright the Gospel would shine if we touched the poor with Christ-exalting mercy. May God raise up many who will build, with joy, ministries of mercy to the city & to the nations. Oh Father, please do this at Olney Baptist & all the churches! For Jesus' sake!

e. The two who were blind but now can see follow Jesus: Verse 34: and followed him.

They get the greatest gift, even better than the gift of sight! They get to be with Jesus where there's fullness of joy & pleasures forevermore! This is the promise for all those who follow Jesus!

f. Jesus doesn't open everyone's eyes, physically or spiritually, nor is He obligated to do so:

John 12:39-40: Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, "He has blinded their eyes & hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, & understand with their heart, & turn, and I would heal them."

g. But if you are a Christian, He has opened your eyes spiritually, & who you are in Him is the most

important thing about you: Daniel Doriani: I recently saw a pastor who went through seminary with me. He was always a man's man, strong & energetic. A few years ago, he contracted a neurological disorder that is steadily burning out his synapses [where nerve impulses are transmitted between cells]. He is slowly losing his energy, his

balance, his muscular control, his speech control. He said, “This illness has shown me that I still go after false lovers, like health. I can still think that Jesus is not enough, that I also need to be healthy and energetic to be happy. But I am learning to find my sufficiency in Jesus.” He paused, “I know I wouldn’t be able to handle this without the resources of the Gospel. I know God can use this to make me more like Jesus. The resurrection teaches me that God can take the worst thing that ever happened and make it into the best thing that ever happened.”

Oh Beloved, what do you want Jesus to do for you? Ask Him. And trust Him that He knows best!

Jesus, through both His power & compassion, demonstrates that He is the God-Man Messiah Who came to open blind eyes & destroy sin & its effects, so that we might be with Him where there’s fullness of joy!

We have all this amazing mercy because Jesus allowed Himself to be blindfolded & beaten; He allowed darkness to overtake Him on that cross – God’s wrath! He died, but then He rose up from the dead to be the greatest light!

Jesus Heals The Begging Blind; And Shows Them Tender Mercy Kind; If They Will Truly Trust And Find; All Joys And Hopes In Him Combined!

Poor blind beggars are by the road
From anguish their hearts might explode
They could not bear their heavy load
And hoped for mercy – their cries showed
The Savior stopped and looked and slowed
For from His heart compassion flowed
And on these men His grace bestowed
For Christ Himself was on the road
To bleed and die for what we owed
And wash away our sinful load
He rose alive – the grave explode
And in His life grace overflowed!

They cried for mercy loud and clear
“Thou Son of David turn Your ear!”
“Our cries for mercy won’t You hear!”
Some followers rebuke and sneer
They will not let them come – draw near
But they won’t be held back by fear
For all the louder they will cheer
And cry for Jesus to appear
From their ambition they won’t veer
And finally Jesus does come near
And grants them sight – makes light appear
Oh what a Son of David’s here!
He stands alone and without peer
He is the God-man we revere
Who died the worst death – so severe
And conquered death as great Premier
His love is deep and true sincere
Only in Him does life cohere
By faith in Him you must draw near
He’ll grant you joy and wipe your tear!

Their mercy-cries made Christ stand still
To help these men was His good will
To save the poor He has a zeal
He'll cure all those He finds are ill
The sick and blind He came to heal
To do all this He climbed that hill
Where for His sheep His blood He'd spill
When on that cross they'd strip and kill
The only One Who did God's will
This sight should grip your heart and chill
The loving Son of God they'd kill?!
But without this we'd still be ill
And since our Christ did all God's will
Then rose up from the tomb with zeal
All God desires He did fulfill
So we can be with Him and heal
In Him we'll have eternal thrill!

We once were blind, but now we see
It's Christ Who saved a wretch like me
Our sin does blind to great degree
Christ had to die to set us free
Amazing that the One In Three
Would come to earth – a man He'd be
And die upon that gruesome tree
His resurrection is the key
To carry out God's full decree
Confess your sins – with Him agree
Into Christ's arms by faith you'll flee
He'll cast your sins into the sea
And then to others make this plea!

Christ Jesus Is The God Who'd Heal
The Mercy-Heart Who'd Pity Feel
And Make The Blind To See Reveal
That He's Messiah Come With Zeal
The Son Of David, King For Real
Who'd Take Our Hell, God's Wrath Ordeal
He'd Die And Rise Redemption Seal
And Crush That Serpent With His Heel
By Faith Alone We're Just And Kneel
Down Low To Christ Our LORD Ideal
He Changed Our Hearts, So Now We Feel
Compassion, Love, And Godly Zeal
For Others And For Christ Who's Real
For He's Our All, Our Strength, Our Zeal!