

That the Blind May See

Luke 18:35-19:10

1/28/01

Intro

- Growth Group Classes will start soon
 - Men's and women's classes this Tuesday
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Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem for the events of His last days on earth. But on the way, he has several encounters and that is where we learn from watching the Lord.

First, He encounters a man by the name of Bartimaeus, who is blind, then Zaccheus who is spiritually blind.

There is much to learn about being blind.

Last week we looked at Rev 3:17ff. In those verses Jesus advises them to get salve for their eyes so they can see. He was referring to spiritual blindness - the most dangerous blindness of all.

Here are lessons we can learn about spiritual blindness.

I. There is None So Blind as Those Who Refuse to See.

Vs 18:38-39

A. Bartimaeus cried out for mercy because he didn't want to stay blind.

B. What is it that they refuse to see?

- The consequences of worldliness.
- Jesus is an example of seeing the truth.

II. What is it You Want Jesus to do For You?

A. There must be a will to see before light pierces the darkness.

Illus- Like hogs in the harvest field. **They won't come out for all your calling. They cannot hear because they have no will to hear.**

Illus- Our dog Cocoa is the same way. **She comes when she wants to come.**

Vs 41

B. What is it that you want Jesus to do?

- Most people want things that will make life easier.
- But what we should want is to have our hearts fully belonging to Christ.

C. We are often blind to what might be if we trust the Lord completely with our lives.

III. The Mark of Christ is Change.

A. Zaccheus responded with how he is changed.

- He would return fourfold to those he defrauded.

B. There should be a distinct difference from our character and that of the world.

- We shouldn't be surprised when the worldly act worldly.
- But we have the character of Christ within us.

Illus- President Bush's team sees the results of Clinton's team.

Illus – Nicole's basketball team played the state champions.

C. Jesus said to Bartimaues that his faith made him well.

- He is a son of Abraham
- SEE ROMANS 4
- FAITH says, "Lord, I believe you're able. I now make myself available to you. Do what you will.

Illus- The couple I couldn't help.

Conclusion

There is not a "type" for change. The Bible tells us that all of us have this opportunity. Consider these classic cases:

Here is C.S. Lewis: militant atheist, Oxford don. The last thing he wants is to be converted. God sneaks up on him, and Lewis is "surprised by joy," and he says, "I am dragged kicking and screaming--the most reluctant convert in all the world--into the Kingdom."

Or here is John Wesley: fanatical son of a minister, a missionary to America, a great theological mind, but a total failure as a human being and a minister. One day he sits in the chapel in England, a failure as a missionary, and his "heart is strangely warmed." He becomes a great fountain for life. John Wesley becomes converted.

Or there's Bill Stringfellow, the most brilliant lawyer in his class at Yale Law School, who sits in his room quietly and reads the Bible. God gets ahold of him, and Bill Stringfellow begins his ministry in Harlem in New York. Many more are changed because of God working in his life and ministry.

There was a man *in his eighties* who had been a vice-president for McGraw-Hill, one of the great publishing firms of our land. He was a brilliant businessman. He was a senior vestryman in the Episcopal church, on the city council where he lived, respected, and loved by all. One weekend, he went off to a Christian conference with a bunch of lay people who began praying with him and talking about Jesus. This beautiful man comes home transformed and says to his neighbors and friends, "I met Jesus."

"What happened to you?"

"I don't know," he says, "I fell in love."

"He's always been a good man," his neighbors said, "but now he's a new man."

Or there's a missionary, such as Frank Laubach in the Philippines, who because of his bitterness and all at age 45 becomes the man who invents the system of learning that has taught millions and millions of people in the world to read.

Or Augustine, the monk with a mistress, who is struggling with his soul, sitting under a tree, saying, "O Lord, make me pure, but not yet." One day God gets him, and Augustine becomes Saint Augustine. But you know the story.

There's William Booth, a very unlikely, rough-cut man, who says over a hundred years ago, "Nobody in London cares about the poor, the drunks, the winos." He invented the Salvation Army. One day he said, "Lord, I give you everything there is in this man William Booth. Do with me what you will." A movement starts that changes the lives of tens and hundreds of thousands of people, because one man is changed.

May God respect you.