



### Looking Inwards (15 mins) *Caring For Each Other*

*Reflecting on your life at the moment, is there anything you would like to share with other members of your home group which you feel is appropriate (this is an **opportunity to share**, not something you have to do, however, 'it's the sharing that enables the caring!') for:*

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



### Looking Outwards (15 mins) *Concern For Others*

*Is there anything concerning someone in your: family; circle of friends; neighbours; or church, which you would like to share (please be careful not to pass on anything that is **confidential** or which you think the person/people concerned would not wish to be shared) for:*

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



### HG40: The Miracles of Jesus (5/6) *A Blind Man Sees*

**Mark 10:46-52**

### Home Group Study Notes

7<sup>th</sup> November 2010 - Pauline Woolnough



PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN  
ON THIS WORKSHEET IN PREPARATION  
**BEFORE** THE MEETING!

*Don't forget to take your Bible to Home Group  
with you, along with any previous notes and  
other resources that might be helpful.*



### Welcome/Ice Breaker (10 mins)

Some people are afraid of going to the dentist. Jesus must have experienced fear as he approached Jerusalem. What things frighten you?



### Looking Upwards (10 mins) *Worship*

In your time of worship, you may want to sing Songs of Praise, or listen to a Worship CD, as well as using Meditations; Bible Readings; Prayers; etc.





## Looking Upwards (40 mins) Bible Study

Read through the text for this study, Mark 10:46-52, and any references given below, alongside those in the sermon notes, then answer the following questions - you may find it helpful to read through the sermon notes as you do so. Discuss your answers with your Home Group.

**1:** If Jesus asked you what do you wanted Him to do for you, what would you reply? How important are your appearances and your privacy when it comes to asking Jesus for help? Is going forward or asking for prayer difficult for you?

**2:** If we want to see mountains moved we may have to take a few risks. Can you think of a time when you have taken a risk for God or are you risk averse when it comes to stepping out in faith? How can we become risk takers, willing, if necessary, to look foolish for God?

**3:** Its costly coming to Christ. What do you feel you had to give up when you came to Him? Are there still thinks that you know you have not surrendered?

*"If I just touch his clothes I'll be healed,"* (Mark 5:28); *"But say the word and my servant will be healed."* Luke 7:7). All of them kept their focus on Jesus and what he was doing, they knew he had healed others and they knew he changed lives. There were many whose lives He didn't touch, there were many people that He passed by but this did not affect these people's belief and faith in Jesus and what He was capable of doing for them.

### See What Jesus *Is* Doing - Not What You *Think* He *isn't*!

Sometimes we can concentrate on what Jesus *isn't* doing as opposed to what he *is* doing. When you ask for prayer and the thing you have asked for doesn't seem to be changing, try not to get discouraged, rather, look to see what Jesus is doing. Choose, in the middle of difficulty, to look at something good that He *is* doing.

When we pray things can sometimes get worse at first and if we're honest the natural response is to panic, to think that prayer isn't working, but God has His own way of doing things and this is the time when we need to keep our nerve maintain our faith in His goodness, willingness and ability to heal and reject any thought that God is not involved or interested in our lives. This is the time when we need to look for where He *is* working, what good things He *is* blessing us with, celebrate them and then thank Him and praise Him for them. If we constantly concentrate on what He *isn't* doing then we will develop a spirit of disappointment and offence, and our faith will shrink and diminish and we will be less likely to pray with faith in future.

### 20/20 vision

This healing of the blind Bartimaeus serves as another powerful example of how Jesus is pleased when our faith sees its opportunity, grasps it, and refuses to let go until we receive what we need from Him. Its also a great example of someone coming to Jesus with real humility. Bartimaeus cried out *"Son of David, have mercy on me!"* and he waited until Jesus beckoned him over. Life had been hard for him, he was blind, he was nothing in society. He sat by the side of the road begging, looking to others to provide some meagre amount of help for him. He had nothing to offer anyone, and he clearly knew his limitations. In our last study the leper showed us that before we come to Jesus it's as if our spirits are diseased because of our sin, and we are lost and outside of God's presence.

Today, Bartimaeus shows us that when we are outside God's presence we are spiritually blind, (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 4:18). and only Jesus can give sight to our dead eyes. Without Jesus we are blind, lost, helpless and unable to save ourselves, we are like the beggar waiting for Jesus to pass by. Its only once we acknowledge and accept that we have limitations and know that we need help, that we learn humility, and its humility that leads us to cry out like Bartimaeus; *"Son of David, have mercy upon me!"* .... and then something truly wonderful happens, because we suddenly realize that we were never meant to do it all on our own in the first place, that was never God's plan. We realize that God has already done a work of amazing grace Himself when he died in our place, and in Jesus he offers us not only healing but salvation. When blind eyes seek the Son of David for mercy their eyes are given sight and they see that in Jesus they have a Saviour.

After Bartimaeus received his healing Jesus told to go on his way but he didn't want to go anywhere, he wanted to stay around Jesus. Jesus had met his every need and Bartimaeus was full of gratitude, he knew that Jesus was the One that he wanted to follow. This is what we find when we come to know Christ as Saviour, life changes and we want to be around Jesus and those who know Him, we want to find out more about Him and have him more involved in our lives.

If that doesn't describe you then you may have to consider your commitment to Christ and if there are things in your life that need to be put right then take the opportunity to come before Him once more, seek his forgiveness and ask Him to restore any lost passion for Him and His work.

### **Humility, Desperation and Risk**

Looking back over this series on the healings of Jesus so far, there are certain things that each of the people that He healed have in common. They all came with humility, aware of their need and knowing that Jesus had the answer, they had heard of His teachings and miracles and believed that He had the power to change their lives. The paralysed man was carried to Jesus on a stretcher by his 4 friends, (Mark 2), the woman said *"If I just touch his clothes I will be healed."* (Mark 5 28), the centurion says *"Lord don't trouble yourself for I don't deserve to have you come under my roof,"* (Luke 7.6), the leper said *"Lord if you are willing,"* (Mark 1 40), Blind Bartimaeus said *"Son of David, have mercy,"* (Mark 10 48).

They were all desperate. One man was paralysed, (Mark 2 2), the woman had been bleeding for 12 years, (Mark 5.25), one man was full of leprosy, (Mark 1 40), the centurion's servant was about to die. (Luke 7.2), Bartimaeus was a blind beggar. They were also willing to take risks. The paralysed man's friends climbed onto a rooftop and lowered their friend on a stretcher through a hole they made in the roof, the outcast woman and the leper risked being stoned or beaten up, the centurion, a Roman soldier may have risked ridicule from cynical Roman friends by asking for help from a Jewish rabbi, Blind Bartimaeus risked the anger of the crowd. Being desperate taking risks and being prepared to look foolish is a common theme throughout the bible, many of the greats whose stories we know and inspire us at one time or another found themselves in situations where they had to totally trust God and risk their lives and those of others or at the very least risk looking foolish if they were wrong.

### **Fools for God**

I wonder how Abraham felt as he prepared to kill his long awaited beloved son Isaac when God commanded him to sacrifice him, how would he have felt if he had misheard God, and how did he feel when the ram appeared and God honoured his faith by accepting the ram in Isaac's place? Did Moses feel ever so slightly foolish as he stood before the Red Sea with arms held out knowing that the might of the Egyptian army raced behind him and all he had was his staff and faith in the God of Israel, but then how elated must he have felt when the impossible happened and the sea parted. His faith in God must have soared as the people walked to safety whilst the Egyptian army was drowned. I wonder how foolish Noah must have felt when people kept asking him what on earth he was doing, what was he building, the long range weather forecast was good, and how did he feel when the first splashes of rain came and just kept on coming? How did a young virgin feel when an angel told her that she had found favour with God and that she would be with child and give birth to a son and how did she feel later knowing she was the Mother of God, and how did Jesus feel nailed to that tree, - (had it all been a mistake?) as he felt abandoned yet still forgave those who had put him there.

The same Spirit who honoured all their faith and raised Jesus from the dead is the same Spirit who lives in us and who urges us to cry out to Jesus with all our needs: *"Son of David have mercy"* (Mark 10:48); *"Lord if you are willing,"* (Mark 1:40);

**4:** What are you disappointed about? What is it that you are asking God about that He is not listening to? Can you think of anything else that He may be doing instead, that you do need to thank Him for?

**5:** How hard is it for you to accept that you have limitations and that what God is really looking for from you is dependency on Him? How does your dependency on Him show itself in everyday life?

**6:** What area of your life needs a great big dose of Bartimaeus' blind faith in Jesus Christ. Is there anything stopping you from asking him for that kind of faith right now?



Is there anything you most want to put into practice as a result of this study?



## HG40: The Miracles of Jesus (5/6) *A Blind Man Sees*

Mark 10:46-52

### Home Group Sermon Notes

7<sup>th</sup> November 2010 - Pauline Woolnough

#### Introduction

In today's story Jesus was approaching Jericho on his way to Jerusalem for Passover. He was entering his last week of life and he must have given thought as to what lay ahead for him, he may have been afraid but as always other people's welfare was his concern as we see here with a man known as Blind Bartimaeus. The city would have been mobbed. It was law that every male Jew over 12 yrs old and who lived within 15 miles of Jerusalem must at some time attend Passover and people who couldn't go came out and lined the streets to encourage those who were going, many probably also came out just to catch a glimpse of the young Rabbi called Jesus who was at odds with the religious leaders of the day. Jesus was a distinguished rabbi and at the height of his popularity so he would have been teaching his disciples and a crowd of interested followers as he walked towards the temple.

At the northern gate to the temple sat Bartimaeus, and he was blind - a common condition in Bible times because of various diseases and poor sanitary conditions, so he had to make his living by begging in the streets. No one was worried about cuts to their benefits in those days, there *were* no benefits and anyone in his situation had to depend upon the generosity of others in order to survive. They say that when you lose one of your senses the others become more acute and sensitive, - well Bartimaeus may have been blind but he wasn't deaf and as he sat begging day after day he heard travellers talking, he heard the name Jesus crop up, about what he was saying, but more than that, what he was doing, the miracles, people being fed, demons being driven out and incurable diseases being healed. If Jesus could do this for others then why not him?

#### The Blind Man Sees

It was very busy this particular day with more people around than usual, and there was a crowd with people scuffling about trying to keep up with someone. Bartimaeus shouted out asking what was going on and when he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by he saw his chance and yelled at the top of his lungs '*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!*' (v 47) People up front told him to shut up and hold his tongue but he shouted all the more, '*Son of David, have mercy on me!*' (v48).

Calling someone "*Son of David*" was equivalent to calling them "Messiah," because to the Jew it signified a person who was the promised descendent of David who would sit upon the throne of Israel. Other beggars may have called out for mercy that day but Bartimaeus expected more than a handout, he saw what many in the crowd didn't see and what many today don't see, he saw who Jesus was and he knew that the Son of David, the Messiah, would answer his call for help. Any attempts to shut him up failed and he just yelled all the more, he was determined to get Jesus to notice him.

This might have been his one and only chance to receive help from Jesus and escape from his world of darkness and he wasn't bothered about what people thought, nothing and nobody was going to make him keep quiet and although Jesus may have been busy teaching and perhaps preoccupied thinking about what lay ahead, he stopped and called Bartimaeus over.

#### Jesus Wants Us To Tell Him

When he got near Jesus asked him, vs51: "*What do you want me to do for you?*" What a strange question, surely it was obvious and Jesus could see what help this poor blind beggar wanted but He knew that by getting Bartimaeus to speak out what he wanted, it helped him to vocalize his faith, because he said, "*Rabbi, I want to see,*" (v51), and Jesus responded by saying "*Your faith has healed you*" (v52). Jesus emphasized Bartimaeus's faith, something he often did when someone came to Him for healing. He never drew attention to His own power because He wanted to encourage more faith in the believer so that the next time they faced another seemingly impossible obstacle they could think back and remember what their little bit of faith in God was able to do last time and they would be much more likely to pray in faith again.

There must have been many beggars around that day, some even worse off than Bartimaeus but there's no record of Jesus stopping and helping them so what was it about Bartimaeus that caught his attention? Only Jesus knows but we can consider a couple of reasons. In Bartimaeus we see a deep desperate heartfelt cry for help and evidence of a humble heart. He was totally aware of his need for help, he knew it was not within his power to have sight restored to his dead eyes and he was powerless to get himself out of the life he was living. However he may have been physically blind but he had 20/20 vision and perfect "eyesight" when it came to seeing that the answer to his cry for help was found in Jesus. Some people are too proud to ask for help, for some its seen as a sign of weakness. We're encouraged ever more these days especially with the intended cuts to public spending, to stand on our own two feet, to be self sufficient to provide for our own needs. God however doesn't see dependency as a weakness and in our relationship with him it's what He is looking for from us, pride is the weakness, not dependency.

#### Don't Keep Up Appearances

Bartimaeus was totally unconcerned about who saw his desperate cry for help, he didn't care what he looked like or what others thought of him, perhaps his blindness helped him here, because he was unaware of scathing glances or irritated looks, his appearance meant nothing to him. He knew that Jesus could give him the help he needed, and he wasn't shy about asking. He was insistent and kicked up such a fuss that Jesus *had* to notice him. People were embarrassed as the local beggar went crazy when Jesus came to town, the uproar was an offence to those listening, but Bartimaeus didn't care. He was ready to overcome any difficulty and risk embarrassment to get what he wanted, he had the kind of faith that wouldn't take no for an answer, just the kind that Jesus loved. Maybe sometimes our prayers don't get the attention they hope for because they lack the insistence and desperation that Bartimaeus had. When Jesus called, Bartimaeus was in such a rush to reach Him that he left his coat behind, a priceless and precious article of clothing and one that would be difficult for him to replace if someone saw an opportunity to pick it up and take off with it before he noticed, but the coat was the last thing on his mind and would have been a price worth paying just to get near to Jesus. A reminder to us also that coming to Jesus is never without personal cost, sometimes there are things we need to give up when we come to Him, e.g. ungodly habits or relationships.

By coming to Jesus and trusting him to heal him, again, the impossible happened, the blind man received his sight and was restored to wholeness at the word of Jesus. Jesus said "*your faith has healed you*" (v51) and this phrase literally means, "has saved you". Not only was Bartimaeus physically healed that day, he was also spiritually healed as well.