

"WHAT DO YOU WANT?"

Mark 10:46-52

Key Verse: 10:51

"'What do you want me to do for you?' Jesus asked him. The blind man said, 'Rabbi, I want to see.'"

When we read Mark's Gospel one thing is conspicuous. Mark's Gospel is called the standard gospel because this gospel includes the most events, even though it is the shortest gospel. The other thing is that half of the Mark's Gospel accounts are focused on Jesus' way to Jerusalem and his crucifixion, while other gospels proportion one-third to this. Mark 10:45 is the key verse of Mark's Gospel. It says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Before the coming of Jesus, those who were served by others were known as masters and they were regarded as great. On the other hand, those who served others were known as servants or slaves, and they were unhappy all the time. They were unhappy in the morning. They were unhappy in the evening. When Jesus said that he did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many, it sounds contradictory. But it is the truth of God. Good examples are Moses, David and Paul, who served their people. The best example is Jesus, who served God's will for world salvation unto death, death on the cross. In Mark 10:45, Jesus teaches us that when we serve others in the name of Jesus we are truly happy. Today's passage is a story about Jesus who healed a blind beggar. In this passage we learn from the beggar how to overcome our fatalistic elements of life. We also learn that we can please God when we come to him, overcoming our fatalism.

I. "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (46-48)

First, the blind man was pathetic because he was blind. Jesus and his disciples and the crowd of people following him came to Jericho, which was 15 miles from Jerusalem, where a rugged cross awaited Jesus. This scene seems to be the prelude of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Jesus' heart must have been heavy as he approached Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples, along with a large crowd, were again on the way to Jerusalem. This parade was delayed by a blind man, Bartimaeus, who was sitting by the roadside begging. This blind man must have been a most pitiful person among all unhappy people. Why was he so? It is because a blind man cannot see anything, but lives in the darkness. How beautiful it is to see budding and sprouting leaves in the spring! How beautiful it is to see the wide summer sea! How beautiful it is to see colorful leaves of autumn trees! How beautiful it is to see white snow everywhere on the ground in the winter! How beautiful it is to look at our lovely mother's face every day! It is a great privilege for mankind to see man and nature and everything in it. But this blind man could not see anything. He could not see his own mother's face. Above all, he could not see his own face. It is easy for a

blind man to live in a world of misunderstanding and prejudice. Misunderstanding often causes one to be hurt deeply. There was a young man who misunderstood his father, thinking that his father loved his younger brother more than him. His misunderstanding grew bigger and bigger until he became a high school dropout. "Prejudice" is also not a good word. A Chinese Ph.D. student got higher scores than a handsome American student on their preliminary exams. But the Chinese girl was flunked and the handsome young American man passed. After experiencing racial prejudice, she was hurt so much so that she married an American boy seven years younger than she so as to soothe her wounded pride. After marriage, her pride was wounded more deeply when her husband never washed dishes even one time, and treated her like a servant. This blind man lived in misunderstanding and prejudice. He must have felt imprisoned by the labyrinth of all the evilness of the dark world. He cried, sorrowing over himself because of his eyes, which seemed to have been made only to shed many tears.

Second, the blind man was pathetic because he did not have his own name. Everyone has his or her name. Someone's name is Wolf. Perhaps his ancestor was a shepherd who was greatly annoyed by many wolves that snatched away his master's sheep. Someone's name is Bird. Perhaps his ancestors got up as early as the early birds. Someone's name is Smith. Perhaps his ancestor was a blacksmith. Even insects have their own names, such as "maggot," "leech," "cockroach" and so on. But this blind man had no name of his own. People called him Bartimaeus, which meant a son of Timaeus. He was a man with no name. He was always there. But people ignored him as if he were not there.

Third, the blind man was pathetic because he was a fatalistic beggar. He could not see. He had no name. Still, he was a human being. He felt hungry exactly three times a day. So he begged from passers-by, saying, "Alms for the blind! Alms for the blind!" But he could hardly get enough money to satisfy his stomach. He cried and cried until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Hebrew people thought that the blind were cursed by God because of their sins. He had all the fatalistic elements of life in himself. For to him, to live was unbearable suffering, yet he was too young to die. One blind man occupied a seat on a night train. A scoundrel pushed him

aside and took his seat. The blind man began to cry so sorrowfully that people who heard him felt very sorry for him. One person wanted to give him his seat out of his compassion. But the blind man said, sobbing, "I have no right to sit on a seat because I am a blind man." He was very fatalistic about his blindness and didn't know how to get out of his fatalism.

Fourth, the blind man Bartimaeus was a man of faith. The blind man's human condition had all the elements of fatalism. So this blind man could have many good excuses not to go to Jesus. He should have been too fatalistic to go to Jesus. As a blind man, to get to Jesus was almost impossible, for there were many people who wanted to get to Jesus. It was easier for him to resign to his fate. But he did not sit down on the mat of his fate. He came to Jesus by faith. Look at verse 47. "When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'" At that time, the Son of David was known as the One who was promised to come and save his people. The Son of David, the promised Messiah, was known even to this blind beggar. The blind man asked the Messiah's mercy. Here we learn that we should not be victims of our human condition or fatalism. We must come to Jesus to overcome our fatalistic human condition.

Fifth, the blind man had faith to overcome people's hindrance. At the moment, the blind man wanted to go to Jesus. Many rebuked him, saying, "You blind beggar. Shut your mouth!" when the blind man began to cry out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" People also hindered his going to Jesus, thinking that he was too presumptuous. People pressed him hard not to go to Jesus. But the blind man began to shout all the more. His cry was a cry to God for help to overcome his inborn fatalism. He might be the first one who cried out to overcome his fatalism by crying out for the Messiah's mercy. His cry was the expression of his faith. This fragile blind man did not succumb to their hindrance. Then God gave him burning fire in his heart to overcome people's hindrance. In this way, he came to Jesus. The blind man was indeed a man of great faith. By faith he overcame his fatalistic human condition and came to Jesus.

II. "What do you want me to do for you?" (49-52)

First, Jesus stopped on the way (49-50). There is a saying, "God helps those who help themselves." Jesus heard this blind man's crying and helped him. Look at verse 49. "Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.' So they called to the blind man, 'Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you!'" Now Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem to die on the cross for the sin of the world. Jesus must have been burdened by the crowd of people following him with false hopes. At that moment, if Jesus were an ordinary man, he would have been indifferent to the blind beggar's crying. But Jesus was not indifferent. He stopped at the crying voice of one blind man. Even though this blind man was completely ignored and despised by others, Jesus honored and respected him as a child of God whose soul was twinkling like a myriad of stars in the sky. His misery was the object of people's entertainment. But Jesus was gracious and compassionate toward him. Jesus said, "Call him." When Jesus said, "Call him," it meant, "Bring my child to me." So they called to the blind man. When he heard that Jesus was calling for him, he threw his cloak of fate aside, jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. Outwardly, he was a fatalistic blind man, but inwardly he was a man of great faith. In this way, the Son of God stopped to help the blind man. Here we learn that Jesus wants us to overcome our fatalism like the blind man did.

Second, Jesus asked, "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus wanted to help him. So he asked in verse 51, "What do you want me to do for you?" This was the question Jesus asked when James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask." (10:35) "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus answered. They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." In reality, James and John did not know what they really wanted.

"What do you want me to do for you?" This question seems to be easy to answer. But by nature, fallen men are apt to follow their fallen desires instead of wanting what they really want. So no one can answer to God, "I want this," because when they have to choose only one thing to ask, there are too many things to ask for.

Like James and John there are so many people who do not know

what they really want. As a national leader of Japan, Mr. Hideyoshi did not know what he really wanted. As a result, he killed innumerable Korean people for a period of six years. Finally he died, not knowing what he really wanted, at the age of 63. Therefore we must know how to answer when Jesus asks, "What do you want me to do for you?" Many young people don't understand why an immoral life is wrong. They have received an education based on secular humanism, which causes people to use sinful human freedom at random and deny God's existence. So they are deprived of a basic code of human morality. As a result, their moral condition is chaotic. In this situation, we don't know what to pray to God about for the future generation. But God is asking us, "What do you want me to do for you?" When we pray about this nation, our prayer topic is very clear. We must pray, "Lord, may God raise 10,000 Bible teachers so that Bible-believing people prevail over ungodly people." Most people worry about future security simply because others worry. In this age of anxiety, we don't know what to pray for them. But God asks us, "What do you want me to do for your people?" We must know that this nation must go back to God; we must pray, "Lord, help us to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness to obtain your blessing."

Jesus asked the same question to the blind man because Jesus wanted to know if this man knew what he really wanted. If he did not know what he really wanted, Jesus could not help him. Let's see what the blind man said to Jesus. Look at verse 51b. "The blind man said, 'Rabbi, I want to see.'" He knew exactly what he wanted. He knew exactly what Jesus wanted him to ask. He knew the key point of Jesus' question. The blind man was a man of wisdom who knew exactly the one thing to ask God. The blind man knew what he really wanted from God. When he knew exactly what he really wanted God to do for him, God answered his prayer.

We have many things that we want God to do for us. But before asking God for something to do for us we must know what God wants us to do. Many people, even the disciples of Jesus, do not know what they really want. But we can learn from Paul. Paul did not know what he really wanted God to do for him. So he wanted honor and wealth. But later, Paul came to know what he should ask God to do for him, for the sake of God's glory as well as for his own success. Paul was on the way to Damascus to perse-

cute the early Christians. The Risen Christ met him on the road and said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" After hearing the voice of the Risen Christ, Paul fell down on the ground. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (Acts 9:4-6) God told him what to do in Acts 9:15,16. It says, "But the Lord said to Ananias, 'Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.'" Paul was able to ask God what God wanted him to do after he was told what to do for God.

Third, Jesus blessed the blind man's faith. Look at verse 52a. "'Go,' said Jesus, 'your faith has healed you.'" This blind man was miserable and he had all the fatalistic elements of life. He was too sick to come to Jesus. But he came to Jesus by faith. When he came to Jesus, Jesus wiped the tears from his eyes and gave him 20/20 vision. Now he could see all the beautiful things of the world, which God had created for his own glory and for the happiness of mankind. Now, he did not have to cry because of his blindness. God also opened his spiritual eyes to see the spiritual realities. When he came to Jesus God gave him eyes to see the kingdom of God.

May God give us faith and wisdom to answer when Jesus asks, "What do you want me to do for you?"