

Jesus Is Passing By

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 November 2019

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this morning with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the gospel according to Mark and chapter 10.

Mark chapter 10, and if we read again at verse 46, Mark chapter 10 at verse 46.

And they came to Jericho, and as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples, and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside.

And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me. Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

God willing, as you know, this Thursday evening to Sunday evening, the faith mission will be back in our community for a short mission.

[1 : 1 5] They're only passing by. They're only passing by for four evenings to remind you about the urgent need to come to Jesus for salvation.

But this time, the faith mission, they won't be bringing a tent like they did in the summer where they were here for three weeks. The mission meetings are going to be held each evening in the Barbas and Brew Community Centre.

Now, I know that for many of you, you came along to the mission tent while it was there. And many of you, you came along and you came back and you enjoyed it. And you liked coming each evening.

But the reason the faith mission is passing by our community again is because they want to know where you're at. They want to know where you're at.

They want to know if anything has actually changed in your life since they were last here. They want to know if you've made a move towards Jesus and committed your life to him. And there's the question.

[2 : 1 5] Have you? Has your life changed? Has anything changed in your life since the faith mission were here in June? Have you made a move towards the Saviour?

Have you committed your life to him? Or are you still in the same position you were in? Unmoved and unchanged. Maybe you would say that, well, while the faith mission were here, you warmed towards the gospel and your interest towards Jesus, it increased.

But after the faith mission went and after the tent was taken down, you cooled. And your interest in Jesus, it just went back to the way it was. Well, this coming week, the faith mission will be passing by.

And again, you're invited to come. And for those of you who were invited to come in the faith mission were here in June and you didn't come. This is another invitation to you and another opportunity for you to come.

It's a neutral venue. It's an informal setting. But most importantly, it's an opportunity to hear the gospel. And as I said, when the faith mission came the first time, if you've already decided in your mind and in your heart that you're not going to go because it's not for you or that you don't feel part of it, I want to say to you again, don't knock it until you've tried it.

[3 : 39] Come along one night. If you don't like it, fine. But don't knock it until you've tried it. And, you know, my Christian friend, I'm sure that you can think of people, I can certainly think of people in my home and family and community who need to be saved.

And with the faith mission passing by our community again, it's a wonderful opportunity for us to invite people to come and hear the gospel. And maybe there was someone for you that you wanted to invite the last time, but you didn't because you were afraid of what they would say.

Maybe there was someone in your heart and you knew that you should have said something, but you didn't. Well, here's another opportunity to invite them to come along one night as the faith mission passes by our community once more.

But of course, it's not the faith mission who are passing by. It's Jesus who is passing by. He's passing by in the gospel. And that's why I want us to consider this passage this morning, because, you know, my unconverted friend here today, when I think of you and when I pray for you, which I assure you is often, I long that you'd be like this blind man, Bartimaeus.

I long that you'd be like him. Because when Jesus passed him by, there was, as we'll see in this passage, there was a realization, there was a rebuke, and there was also a request.

[5 : 09] When Jesus passed by Bartimaeus, there was a realization, a rebuke, and a request. So there are the three things I'd like us to look at this morning.

First of all, a realization. We see that in verse 46. It says in verse 46, In this verse, Mark tells us that Jesus and his disciples, they're passing through the community of Jericho.

They don't stay in Jericho, because they're only just passing through. They're on their way up to Jerusalem, because as we read back in verse 32, Jesus and his disciples, they're on this road heading towards Jerusalem.

And in order to get to Jerusalem, you have to pass through the community of Jericho. But the reason they were going up to Jerusalem was that they were going to celebrate the Passover, which was an important festival in the Jewish calendar.

And every year around April time, the Jews, they would come from all over the nation of Israel, and they would travel towards Jerusalem in order to celebrate the Passover.

[6 : 26] And so Jesus and his disciples, they're all heading to Jerusalem. They're all heading in one direction, and they have to pass through Jericho with all these crowds. These crowds following with them.

But what's remarkable here is that unlike all those around him who are traveling to Jerusalem, Jesus isn't thinking about the Passover.

Jesus is thinking about his death and resurrection. Because as we read earlier, Jesus gave this detailed description of what was going to happen to him when he finally reached Jerusalem.

We're told in verse 33, we are going up to Jerusalem. This is Jesus speaking. We are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes.

And they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him and flog him and kill him. And after three days, he will rise.

[7 : 24] Now, if you're using the Pew Bible, you'll notice from the heading just above that verse that this is the third time that Jesus gave a detailed description of his death.

Because back in chapter 8, verse 31, Jesus uttered similar words. He said, The Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed and after three days rise again.

And then again in chapter 9, verse 31, for a second time, Jesus tells his disciples the same thing that he's going to Jerusalem. He says, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.

They will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise. And now for a third time, Jesus tells his disciples what's going to happen when they reach Jerusalem.

Three times Jesus gives this detailed description of his own death and resurrection. But each time it's met with confusion. The first time Jesus says it, Peter rebukes Jesus for even thinking such a thing.

[8 : 29] The second time, the disciples, they don't say a word. They keep silent. The third time, the disciples, they don't even know what to say to Jesus. They don't know how to respond. And so as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, we see here that he wasn't thinking about the Passover.

He was thinking about his own death and resurrection. Jesus now knows that his hour has come. And that in a few short days he's going to be betrayed and delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes.

And they will condemn him to death. They will mock him, spit on him, flog him and crucify him. But after three days he will rise. Everyone else around Jesus in this crowd and even the disciples, they're all thinking about the Passover at Jerusalem.

But Jesus is thinking about his death. Jesus is thinking about the cross. And the reason why he came into the world. Jesus was thinking that he came, why did he come into the world?

He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Jesus was thinking as he passed by Jericho. He was thinking about who he came to serve.

[9 : 43] Because as we read in verse 45, the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. While everyone was on their way up to Jerusalem, thinking about the Passover.

Jesus was thinking about lost sinners like you and me. Because that's why he came. He came to seek and to save the lost. And it's with this in mind and thinking about what Jesus was thinking about, we're told as Jesus went through Jericho.

He passed through the community of Jericho. And sitting by the roadside was this blind beggar called Bartimaeus. And everyone in the crowds who passed by this blind beggar, Bartimaeus, they're all on their way up to Jerusalem.

They all knew why Bartimaeus was there. They knew he was a sinner. They knew Bartimaeus was blind. They knew that Bartimaeus was lost. They knew that Bartimaeus was an outcast.

They knew that Bartimaeus was a poor, helpless beggar who could do nothing to help himself. To everyone in the crowds who was on their way up to the Passover, the harsh reality was, to them, to the crowds, he was just a waste of space.

[11 : 03] But you know what I love about this passage? It's a wonderful passage. What I love about it is that even though the crowds and the disciples knew who Bartimaeus was, they didn't know who Jesus was.

They didn't know who Jesus was. But the amazing thing was Bartimaeus did. Bartimaeus knew who Jesus was. Even though he was a poor, helpless beggar who had never seen Jesus with his eyes, Bartimaeus, he had heard all about Jesus.

And Luke, in his gospel, he tells us that when Bartimaeus heard this commotion of people going past him towards Jerusalem, he asked someone, what's going on?

And we're told that someone from the crowd told blind Bartimaeus, Jesus of Nazareth, he's passing by. Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. And so when Jesus was passing by the community of Jericho on the way to the cross, even though blind Bartimaeus had never seen him with his eyes, Bartimaeus had heard all about Jesus.

And even though he was blind, he knew who Jesus was. And you know, as I said earlier, my unconverted friend, when I think of you, and when I pray for you, I think that you're like blind Bartimaeus.

[12 : 26] You're just like blind Bartimaeus. Because like Bartimaeus, you've never seen Jesus. None of us have seen him with our eyes. But you've heard all about him.

Like Bartimaeus, you're blind. But you know who Jesus is. Because you've heard about this Jesus since your childhood. Whether you heard about him from your parents, or you heard about Jesus in school, or you heard about Jesus in Sunday school, you know who Jesus is.

Because, well, some of you have been attending church for years. Decades even. You know who Jesus is. You've heard all about him. You know that he's the son of God.

You know that he's the promised Messiah. You know that he's the savior of sinners. You came into this sin-sick, fallen world to die on a cross, so that sinners like you and me could be saved and forgiven by trusting in him with all our heart.

You know all this. I don't need to tell you this. Because you've heard it all before. But unlike Bartimaeus, you're doing nothing about it.

[13 : 36] Doing nothing about it. Because when blind Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he didn't let his opportunity pass him by.

My friend, when Bartimaeus heard that Jesus was passing by, he knew that it was his last opportunity. He knew it.

Bartimaeus knew that as Jesus went towards Jerusalem, towards the cross, it would be the last time that Jesus would pass him by. Which is why he didn't say what you often say.

Because what you often say when Jesus passes you by every Sunday morning, I'll leave it to later. Not just now. Maybe one day.

Maybe tomorrow. Maybe at a more convenient time in my life. But like you, my friend, like you, Bartimaeus knew all too well that he might not have another opportunity tomorrow.

[14 : 43] Like you, Bartimaeus knew all too well that life is uncertain, death is sure, sin is the cause, Christ is the cure.

And you know, it was with such a realisation that Jesus was passing him by for the last time that Bartimaeus took the opportunity presented before him to cry out to Jesus for mercy.

And you know, my unconverted friend, the reality is, the reality is, and we've seen it in the lives of others in our community this past week, the reality is this might be your last opportunity for Jesus passing you by.

Because you might not see the faith mission this weekend. You might be in the great eternity. That's the reality. My friend, like Bartimaeus, you need to wake up to the realisation Jesus might be passing you by today for the last time.

The last time. Therefore, like Bartimaeus, you need to take this opportunity, present it before you, and cry out to Jesus for mercy.

[16 : 01] That's the urgency of the gospel. That's what Jesus, that's what Jesus did. He passed by, and what do you see Bartimaeus doing? Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

That's what you need to do. That's what you need to do. That needs to be your prayer today. Not tomorrow. Or tomorrow might be too late. It needs to be the prayer today.

Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me. Have mercy on me. That's what you need to do today. Not tomorrow.

But you know, what we see with blind Bartimaeus is that when he came to the realisation that he needed to cry out for mercy, you know, the crowds responded with a rebuke.

And that's what I want us to see secondly. A rebuke. There was a realisation, but then a rebuke. Look at verse 47. And when he had heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

[17 : 12] And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, son of David, have mercy on me. You know, when Bartimaeus came to the realisation that Jesus was passing him by for the last time, Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus for mercy.

But as we read, when the crowd heard Bartimaeus crying out, he was crying out, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me. Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.

And as he cries out, we're told that many in the crowd rebuked Bartimaeus. And they told him to keep silent. And this word rebuked, it's very important because it emphasises that as Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus for mercy, the people in the crowd, they rebuke him, they reproach him, they reprove him, they reprimand Bartimaeus.

You could even say that this word says that they physically tried to keep his mouth shut. But what's interesting about this word rebuke is that it's the same word that was used back in verse 13.

We're told in verse 13, they were bringing children to Jesus that he might touch them. And the disciples rebuked them. Do you know, my friend, the disciples and the crowds rebuked people for coming to Jesus.

[18 : 38] Why? Because they had it in their minds that only certain types of people can come to Jesus. They had it in their minds that only good people who are good living, who have good religious morals can come to Jesus.

But what we have to see with the rebuke of the disciples in verse 13 and even the rebuke of the crowds in verse 48, what we have to see is that these rebukes, they're straight from the lips of Satan.

Because it's Satan that tells people that Jesus isn't interested in children. It's Satan that fills our minds with the lie that only certain kinds of people can come to Jesus.

Jesus. My friend, it's Satan that tells you that you should leave your children at home because they're a distraction. Well, that's a lie. My friend, it's Satan that tells you that you're too sinful and beyond hope.

It's Satan that tells you that you're not good enough to be a Christian. It's Satan that tells you that Jesus doesn't have time for you and he's not interested in you. It's Satan that tells you that you're going to lose everything by becoming a Christian.

[19 : 50] You're going to lose your friends and your fun and maybe even your family. It's Satan that tells you that you'll never last as a Christian if you commit your life to Jesus Christ.

It's Satan that rebukes you and tells you to be silent when you're crying to Jesus for mercy. It's Satan that tells you you'll never change. You'll never be good enough. You'll never be saved.

You'll never get to heaven. My friend, don't listen to him. Don't listen to him. Rebuke him. Tell him as Jesus said to Peter, get behind me, Satan.

My friend, you need to be like Bartimaeus. Because when Satan came and rebuked Bartimaeus and told him to be silent, Bartimaeus, what are we told about him?

He cried all the more, Jesus have mercy on me. Jesus have mercy on me. Jesus have mercy on me.

[20 : 51] And you know, my unconverted friend, you might be crying out to Jesus to have mercy on you. But is it an earnest cry? Is it an earnest cry?

Is it a wholehearted cry? Is it a sincere cry? Is it a genuine, heartfelt cry? Is it a cry from out of the depths of your soul?

Just like we were singing in Psalm 130, Lord, from the depths to thee I cry. My voice, Lord, do thou hear. Unto my supplications voice, give an attentive ear.

My friend, it's when you cry to Jesus from out of the depths that he hears you. And the amazing thing is he calls you. He calls you. Because as Jesus passed by for the last time in this passage, it was in ignoring the devil's rebuke that Bartimaeus, he cries out all the more.

And we're told in verse 49, Jesus stopped. Jesus stopped and said, call him. Call him.

[22 : 00] And they called the blind man, saying to him, take heart. Get up. He's calling you. He's calling you.

Everyone in the crowds knew who Bartimaeus was. They all knew Bartimaeus was a sinner. They all knew that Bartimaeus was blind and lost and an outcast. They knew that Bartimaeus was a poor, helpless beggar.

Everyone in the crowds knew who Bartimaeus was. But so did Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus knew who he was. That's why he cried out to Jesus for mercy.

Bartimaeus knew that Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners like himself to repentance. Bartimaeus knew that Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Bartimaeus knew that Jesus came to seek and to save people like him who are lost. And my friend, the glory of the gospel is that this Jesus calls lost, blind sinners to come to him.

[23 : 06] This Jesus calls poor, helpless beggars to come to him. And the gospel says to us, take heart. Get up.

He's calling you. And my unconverted friend, that's why I think of you. That's why I pray for you. That like Bartimaeus, you would realize that the gospel is saying to you today, take heart.

Get up. He's calling you. He's calling you. And you know, is that not how the hymn writer put it? Softly and tenderly, Jesus is calling.

Calling for you and for me. Patiently, Jesus is waiting and watching. Watching for you and for me. Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading?

Pleading for you and for me. Why should we linger and heed not his mercies? Mercies for you and for me. Time is now fleeting.

[24 : 12] Moments are passing. Passing for you and for me. Shadows are gathering. Deathbeds are coming. Coming for you and for me. Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised.

Promised for you and for me. Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon. Pardon for you and for me. Come home, says the hymn writer.

Come home. Ye who are weary, come home. Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling. Calling. O sinner, come home.

Calling. O sinner, come home. My friend, take heart. Get up. He's calling you.

He's calling you. But you need to respond. There's one more thing I want us to see here because there's a request.

[25 : 14] A realization, a rebuke, and a request. Look at verse 50. And throwing off his cloak, Bartimaeus sprang up and came to Jesus.

And Jesus said to him, What do you want me to do for you? And the blind man said to him, Rabbi, let me recover my sight. When Bartimaeus knew that Jesus was calling him, you know, he couldn't refuse.

As hard as it was to make that step of commitment, that initial step, as hard as it was for him, Bartimaeus knew that he couldn't let this opportunity pass him by.

So what does Bartimaeus do? We're told he lets go. He lets go. Bartimaeus let go of what he held dear to in life.

And he just came to Jesus. Although it was only a cloak, it was all Bartimaeus had. And he just let it go in order to commit his life to Jesus Christ.

[26 : 20] And my unconverted friend, like Bartimaeus, when Jesus is calling you, you can't let this opportunity pass you by. And as hard as it may be for you, you have to let go of whatever it is that's holding you back.

You have to just let go of it and make that initial step of commitment. And you know, I love the question that Jesus asks Bartimaeus.

Bartimaeus, he lets go. He gets up. He comes to Jesus. He takes that initial step. And what's the first thing Jesus asks him? What do you want me to do for you?

And you know, it's the same question that the disciples were asked in verse 36. But instead of letting go of their worldly possessions and committing their life to Jesus Christ, the disciples, they actually start clinging to their worldly possessions and make the boldest request, grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left in your glory.

But the disciples, they're not thinking about heavenly glory, they're thinking about earthly glory. They think Jesus is going to go to Jerusalem and become an earthly king with an earthly rule. And so when Jesus asks the disciples, what do you want me to do for you?

[27 : 36] They wanted status. But when Jesus asked blind Bartimaeus, who was now standing face to face with Jesus, Jesus asks, what do you want me to do for you?

You know, Bartimaeus, he didn't need to be asked twice. He wanted salvation. Rabbi, let me recover my sight.

And we're told, verse 52, Jesus said to him, go your way. Your faith has made you well. And immediately, he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

My unconverted friend, when I think of you and when I pray for you, I long that you would be like Bartimaeus because today, Jesus is passing by.

Jesus is passing by. And he's asking you today, what do you want me to do for you? What a question.

[28 : 48] Jesus is asking you, what do you want me to do for you? And I hope and pray that your response to Jesus will be like Bartimaeus.

That you will say to him very simply, Jesus, have mercy on me. Jesus, have mercy on me. Don't waste your opportunity because this might be your last opportunity as Jesus passes by in the gospel.

may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to thee that Jesus passes by.

We marvel, Lord, that these opportunities are given to us week by week. But Lord, how little we realize that when we are on our last opportunity, and Lord, help us, we pray, to make the most of every opportunity that is given to us.

O, that we would seek Jesus and seek the Lord while he is to be found and call upon him while he is near. Lord, we realize that this world it has many distractions.

[30 : 09] The devil comes in many different forms and ways. But Lord, we pray that thy word today, O, that thou would send thy light forth and thy truth, that it would be a guide to each and every one of us to lead us to the rock that is higher than us, who is Jesus Christ.

Lord, bless us, we pray. Keep us on mercy's ground until we find thee. And Lord, that we would find thee while the time is now. For now is the accepted time and today is the day of salvation.

All that they would be rejoicing in heaven even today over sinners in this place repenting, turning from their sin and turning to this Jesus, saying like blind Bartimaeus, Jesus, have mercy on me.

Lord, hear us in, we pray. Continue with us, we ask, for we ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. We're going to bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 40.

Psalm 40 in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 40.

[31 : 31] Psalm, I'm sure that's very familiar to us. It's on page 259. It's the testimony of everyone who cries out to Jesus for mercy.

And if I could ask the presenter, will he sing on to the end of the double verse marked five? Psalm 40 from the beginning. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.

At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way.

He put a new song in my mouth our God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear and on the Lord rely. sing on down to the end of the double verse marked five of Psalm 40 to God's praise.

I waited for the Lord for the Lord my Lord and patiently did bear and then to me and then to me he did find my voice and cry to hear.

[32 : 58] He took me from the fearful pit and from the mighty clay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way.

He put a new song in my mouth our God to magnify many shall see yet and shall fear and on the Lord we lie.

O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord we lie.

respect in all the proud nor such us turn aside to light O Lord my God O many are the wonders thou hast done thy gracious thoughts to us were far above all thoughts are gone in order none can rest on them to thee if they declare and speak of them

I would they more than can be numbered ours The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore Amen Amen Amen Amen