

# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

SUNDAY MARCH 15, 2020

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## “Getting Your Feet Wet”

Based on Mark 10:46-52

*If I am going to experience a greater measure of God's power in my life, it will usually...begin by my acting in faith-trusting God enough to take a step of obedience.. Simply acknowledging information about his power is not enough.*

*I have to get my feet wet.*

~John Ortberg

**Who was this man, Bartimeaus?**

- How long had he been blind?
- How old of a man was he?
- Was he a man of faith?
- Where was his family?
- How long had he been a beggar at the side of the road?

So many questions!

Here's what we do know.

Some versions of the text imply that Bartimeaus had had his sight earlier in life, and for some reason became blind. Which leads to more questions! Had he had an accident or a fall, which left him without the use of his eyes? Disease? Cataracts? Born blind? However it happened, Bartimeaus no longer had his sight, or any

expectation that that would change.

We know his family did not support him. If he had been beloved, you would have expected him to be cared for by loved ones, as an elderly relative would have been. Did he have a wife or children? Did his family abandon him because he could no longer provide for them? Did they force him out of the home because they believed him cursed for his infliction? Had he chosen to leave, so as to not bring shame upon those he loved? More questions, few answers.

“RABBI, I  
WANT TO SEE.”

~MARK 10:51

For all that we don't know about this man, we do know that Bartimeaus' life was set down a dismal and difficult course which was likely to lead to a cold, lonely death by the side of the road, or with a knife in his back from a passing thief. But it is said that when one loses one of their five senses, the remaining four become even more finely tuned to the

world around them. I suspect, that while Bartimeaus could not see, he could hear more than you and I would probably ever notice.

Imagine the number of people who would have passed by Bartimeaus month after month, year after year, completely oblivious to his presence or his ears. How many conversations would he have heard: husbands and wives bickering over how much money to spend on groceries; whispered words between lovers; school children sharing a joke; businessmen plotting their next big deal; friends coming together for a mug of ale at the pub; priests saying prayers on the way to the temple; talk of a man named Jesus who was coming to town to preach.

It must have been difficult to sit there and know for certainty that you would never have a family to go home to, or grandchildren to hug you; to never have anyone invite you to sit with them at the pub or a lover to whisper sweet nothings in your ear. But it would have taught Bartimeaus of the richness of people and the complexity of relationships. In

the days and months, between the whisps of conversation on the street, Bartimaeus did not get angry for what he did not have, but began to dream of what life could be like. Impossible dreams. But dream them he would.

"If I could ever see again," he might have thought, "I would grab my grandchildren so fast, and soak in every hug I could. I would accept ever offer for time with friends. I wouldn't fuss about grocery bills anymore. I would appreciate and enjoy each day and the people around me to its fullest!"

And then, one day, the impossible, became possible. It was said that Jesus could perform miracles. Maybe so. Maybe not. But today, Bartimaeus was not going to wait to find out. He was going to make himself seen! He was going to make himself heard! Because Bartimaeus had discovered that he had so much to live for. As he could hear the group around Jesus getting closer to him, he cried out over and over:

*Son of David, have mercy on me!" (v47, 48)*

And when he was noticed, he did not hesitate: he was not held back by a world that had labeled him as a 'useless beggar'; he was not ashamed by the title of 'afflicted' or 'cursed' which hung over his head. He jumped up, he threw off his cloak, and simply said,

*"Rabbi, I want to see." (v51)*

And see he did. His eyesight was restored. His chance at a new life handed to him. His faith, in the ability of a Saviour to make the impossible, possible, had made him well.

My friends, Bartimaeus was about as low on the scale of life as one could go.

- He dreamed of impossible things.
- He kept his heart open for moments of opportunity.
- He waited patiently.
- But, he did not hesitate when the holy moment arrived.
- And, he took the first step.

He did not doubt, like Peter had on the water. He was not afraid, like the disciples were in the boat. He believed that Christ could do the impossible. He was willing to take the first step.

Each and every day, our Saviour presents to you, opportunities to be drawn closer to Him. Perhaps it is just something small and comfortable to remind you that He is close. Perhaps it is an opening or opportunity you have been hoping for, waiting for or dreaming of. So when it comes,

- Are you ready?

- Can you throw off the past, and leap into the future with Christ?
- Can you push aside the expectations others have put on you, or you have put on yourself and move forward into a life that is richer and fuller than before?
- Can you take the first step?

Are you willing to get your feet wet?

Are you going to splash in the kiddie pool?

Or are you ready to dive right into the deep end with your Saviour?

Are you ready to get your feet wet?



*The material in this Lenten Series is based on the book, "If you Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat" by John Ortberg.*