

Jesus and his companions had arrived at the ancient city of Jericho, only about fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. They were on their way to Jerusalem for the annual feast of Passover. Suddenly a voice cried out: *“Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.”*

We learn that the man was a blind beggar, named Bartimaeus. It’s interesting that he was told to stop calling out to Jesus, but Bartimaeus persisted, calling out, again and again: *“Son of David, have pity on me.”*

We can picture the scene: Jesus stops the crowd and asks to have the man behind that voice brought before him. Bartimaeus stood before Jesus. Jesus was undoubtedly looking at the man before him, though Bartimaeus could not see Jesus, who asked, *“What do you want me to do for you?”*. The blind man said, *“Master, I want to see.”*

While Jesus’ restoration of Bartimaeus’ sight is at the heart of this story, there is another lesson on sight going on in the story. The crowd looked at Bartimaeus and saw only a blind beggar, a throwaway human being who is not worthy to disturb the busy rabbi from Nazareth. Jesus looked at Bartimaeus however, and saw a child of God, a victim of the sin of humanity and a fallen world.¹

There something important for you and me to consider in this. Like Bartimaeus, we are in need of healing and restoration. It may not be physical blindness, but instead some other form of malady.

- Perhaps you bear the wounds of rejection, perhaps from a parent, a spouse, a child, or another person that you love.
- Perhaps you’ve made regrettable decisions that continue to bear effect on your life.
- Maybe you’re burdened by things in your past that you feel compelled to hide from others, but also even try to suppress from your memory.
- Perhaps you’re currently stuck in a pattern of sin from which you can’t find freedom, or maybe you haven’t come to a place where you even desire to be freed.
- It could be that you feel like you aren’t accepted or loved by those around you.
- Maybe you continue to grieve over a significant loss, whether it’s a person, a job, your homeland.
- Perhaps life feels like it’s just so hard, and that nothing seems to go right.

There are so many other common ways that we are in need of healing, but if we’re being honest and truly introspective, pretty much all of us need it in one way or another.

And in this, you may see yourself the way Jesus’ followers saw the blind beggar: that you are throwaway person, unworthy to disturb the busy rabbi from Nazareth. That distorted self-identity is a lie. Yes, you are broken. Yes, you’re in need of healing, but as Jesus saw Bartimaeus as a child of God, so he sees you. Close your eyes and see yourself right where you are now.

Ask this question: *“Jesus, what do you see when you look at me?”* Imagine Jesus looking at you as he looked at Bartimaeus, wishing you could see yourself as he sees you. Say to him, *“Master, I want to see. Help me see myself as you see me. Help me to be free from the distorted view of myself, the shame, the unworthiness, the disappointments or continued struggles. Help me to stop believing that I’m in control of my realities, and that I can do it all myself. Jesus, son of David, have pity on me. Free me and help me to truly see.”*

There’s an expression: *rescued people rescue people*. Bartimaeus didn’t just go to celebrate restored sight and get on with ‘normal’ life; he followed Jesus and became a disciple.

We tend to be fearful, whether we admit it or not, and further, we’re so distracted with stuff and with the noise of life, that we either ignore or don’t even recognize our need for healing. To be sure, in our humility and in Jesus’ healing, there is much more that he could and would do through us. Those that God has entrusted to us stand to benefit. *Jesus, son of David, have pity on us. Free us and help us to truly see.”*

¹ Bergsma, John. *The Word of the Lord: Reflections on the Sunday Mass Readings for Year B*. Emmaus Road Publishing. Kindle Edition.