

Isaiah 42:1-7**The Servant of the Lord**

42 “Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
 my chosen one in whom I delight;
 I will put my Spirit on him,
 and he will bring justice to the nations.

² He will not shout or cry out,
 or raise his voice in the streets.

³ A bruised reed he will not break,
 and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out.

In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;

⁴ he will not falter or be discouraged
 till he establishes justice on earth.

In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”

⁵ This is what God the Lord says—

the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out,
 who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it,
 who gives breath to its people,
 and life to those who walk on it:

⁶ “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness;
 I will take hold of your hand.

I will keep you and will make you
 to be a covenant for the people
 and a light for the Gentiles,

⁷ to open eyes that are blind,
 to free captives from prison
 and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

Mark 10:46-52**Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight**

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of

Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.”

So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

⁵¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

⁵² “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

It would be good to have your **Bibles opened** at – **Mark 10:46-52**.

There’s an **outline** for you to take **notes**. Let me **pray** first.

Let’s pray...

Context (v46)

Last week we saw two of Jesus’ disciples – in Jesus’ inner circle – that’s James and John – ask Jesus for a favour – to sit on Jesus’ left and right - when Jesus comes into His glory – and Jesus denied their request.

This week we have a blind man – an outsider – not in Jesus’ inner circle – who also asks for a favour – but this time - Jesus’ grants the request.

Quite a contrast really – James and John are in a privileged position – they are two of Jesus’ chosen 12 apostles – but instead of being satisfied with that - they want even more privileges.

Whereas this blind man is an outsider – totally disadvantaged – and just wants a basic human right – to be able to see!

We pick up the story in verse 46 –

Jesus and His disciples come to Jericho – they are on the Jericho Road – that leads to Jerusalem – 24km away.

And Jesus is heading to Jerusalem to die!

Next week – we will see Jesus ride into Jerusalem – for Palm Sunday and less than a week after that – He will be crucified.

We also know it’s the annual festival of Passover.

So, there’s a large crowd in Jericho – getting ready for the Passover.

Jericho was a city where many priests served on a roster for Passover – so the place is humming with activity.

And there’s a man – Bartimaeus – which means Son of Timeas – “bar” is like our “mac” or “mc” or “O” – it means “son of”.

The Problem for Bart (vv46-48)

Bartimaeus has a problem

He’s blind – Blind Bart!

And he’s begging on the side of the road

Being blind – he can't work – he has no source of income – there's no Centrelink
 Bart has heard that Jesus of Nazareth is coming – and he knows Jesus is the only one who can help him

And in fact – this is Bart's one and only opportunity for Jesus to help – Jesus won't be coming to Jericho again
 God's timing is everything!

Like a lot of people with a disability – things like blindness or deafness – disabled people are often blessed with insight and their other senses are often heightened.

Bart knows something about Jesus – that even Jesus' disciples are still grappling with – Bart calls Jesus – “*Son of David*”

“*Son of David*” is a title given to God's Promised Messiah

Messiah means “***God's chosen anointed One***” – the One God promised centuries earlier He would send to save His people

And God promised that this Messiah would be someone from King David's family – King David lived 1000 years before Jesus' time (and 3000 years ago for us) – and God promised that this Messiah would be a forever King and descendant of King David.

Blind Bart knows that Jesus is this promised Messiah forever King

And so he cries out – v47 – “*Son of David, have mercy on me*”

Now – in the culture of the day – people like blind Bart – were treated as outcasts – anyone with such disabilities was assumed to be cursed by God – and generally rejected by society

The disciples and the crowd – see Bart as annoying – and v48 – they tell him to put a sock in it.

But Blind Bart is not put off – he just shouts even louder “*Son of David, have mercy on me*”

This is the only place in Mark’s Gospel where anyone refers to Jesus as the “*Son of David*”, other than Jesus Himself!

The Miracle (vv48-52)

Then comes the miracle!

V48 - Jesus stops in His tracks!

Remember, Jesus is heading to Jerusalem, to His death – but...

Jesus is full of compassion and...

Blind Bart using this title “Son of David” - has grabbed Jesus’ attention!

Jesus tells the disciples to call Blind Bart over – v49

And the disciples change their tune now telling Blind Bart to “*Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you!*”

Bart’s not going to miss this opportunity

V50 – He throws his cloak aside and jumps up – and goes to Jesus.

Then Jesus asks the same question in v51 that he asked James and John last week “*What do you want me to do for you?*”

How would we answer that?

(pause)

Blind Bart could have asked for anything – money - a job – security - a woman?

But he asks for one thing “*Rabbi, I want to see*”

Bart actually uses the word **Rabboni** which is an Aramaic form of Rabbi and means ‘**my teacher**’ or ‘**my master**’ [used by Mary Magdalene which she saw the risen Jesus] – it is a more personal and respectful form of Rabbi!

As Bart began to utter those words – he was blind

By the time Bart finished those words – he could see!

No surgery – not even a touch!

Just the words – v52 “**Go – your faith has healed you!**”

At that point – Bart saw Jesus face to face!

One day – we too will see Jesus face to face – and it will be the greatest sight we will ever see – seeing Jesus and then spending eternity with Him!

(pause)

And when Bart was healed – he didn’t go on his way [like many of the other people Jesus healed] – **Bart followed Jesus along that road to Jerusalem** – and who knows what Bart would face as a follower of Jesus – as Jesus goes to Jerusalem to be arrested and crucified?

Bart didn’t care – the sight of Jesus was enough for Bart – it was life-changing.

That’s what an encounter with Jesus does – it changes lives forever!

This miracle shows us that:

- Jesus is - God’s promised Messiah – the Son of David

- Jesus is the Son of God and has the Power of God – Jesus just speaks and heals – just like God spoke at Creation and created everything!
- And that Jesus always responds to genuine faith in Him

The Lessons We Learn From Blind Bart

What **lessons** can we learn from Blind Bart?

[Slide 1-Persistence]

1st lesson – We can learn **Persistence!**

- Blind Bart was persistent – almost to the point of being annoying - even when others were trying to silence Him
- Remember Jesus says in Matthew 7:7-8 in the Sermon on the Mount - 7 ***“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”***

And the sense of this is – keep asking, keep seeking and keep knocking – knock God’s door down with your prayers!

- Our persistence is to be bordering on nagging God – even being annoying. I don’t know what you’re praying for in your life – but if we want God to listen – we have to cry out to Him like Bart – ***“Lord, have mercy on me!”*** – ***“Lord, have mercy on my sick relative”*** – ***“Lord, have mercy on my child that has gone astray!”*** – ***“Lord, have mercy on my marriage!”*** – ***“Lord, have mercy, help my family to love one another!”***
- Persistence means – we don’t stop praying even when God seems to be silent and even when God makes us wait!

Charles Spurgeon puts it this way *“Take the gates of Heaven and shake them with such vehemence as though you would pull the gate posts out of the ground. Stand at Mercy’s door and take no denial! Knock, and knock and knock again, as though you were shaking the spheres of Heaven – until you obtain an answer to your cries!”*

That’s what Bart did!

God is in the miracle business!

- In some ways, Bart was like a child. When children are very young – they don’t care who’s around – they just yell to their mummy or daddy – and keep yelling until they get an answer. Jesus says earlier in this chapter – chapter 10 of Mark – v15 – *“Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it”*. Bart had a child-like faith – that’s all he needed – that’s all we need!

Which leads us to the...

2nd Lesson – We can learn Faith

[Slide 2-Faith]

- Blind Bart was healed because of his great faith in Jesus – He totally believed and was convinced – about who Jesus was – and that Jesus could and would heal him – no doubts whatsoever!
- In the same way as the woman who couldn’t stop bleeding in Mark chapter 5 – she simply touched Jesus’ garment – and her faith healed her
- Do we have that sort of faith? Here’s how the apostle John sees it – in **1 John 5:14** – *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask*

anything according to his will, he hears us". Do we have faith – that never doubts – like Bart?

- And Bart asked with the right motive – He had genuine faith in Jesus as the Messiah – the Son of David - and he simply asked for restoration of his sight – not for selfish or material gain – like James and John asked last week. James, the brother of Jesus reminds us in **James 4:3** - "*When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures*"
- What's the motive behind our prayers? Are we praying for God's will to be done or for our will to be done?

(pause)

- True faith means trusting that God hears and will answer in His own perfect timing and perfect way
- True faith keeps calling out "Lord, have mercy" knowing Jesus is willing and able to respond!
- And true faith in Jesus – leads to following Jesus – we just can't get enough of Him – we want to be near Him always – like Bart did!

3rd lesson – We can learn **Gratitude**

[Slide 3-Gratitude]

- Blind Bart was grateful to Jesus – in Luke's version of this same story – Luke 18:43 says: *Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.*
- Blind Bart's gratitude – led him to also follow Jesus

- What about us? Do we show gratitude when God answers our prayers. The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Spiritual blindness

Now this miracle for Bart is fantastic!

[Slide-Spiritual Blindness]

But it doesn't have much to do with us – we're not blind like Bart – are we?

(pause)

Well actually – we're not **physically blind**

Our natural state is **spiritual blindness** — unable to see God's truth — and only **Jesus** can open our eyes to see Him clearly

You see **we are all spiritually blind - blinded by our sin** – until we accept Jesus into our lives

Like Bart - we all need to see – to see Jesus – to see who He really is

More important than Blind Bart seeing – is that he had faith and believed in Jesus

You see ***"It's better to be blind and see with our heart who Jesus is and believe in Him – than it is to have two good eyes and to totally miss Jesus"***

Jesus is calling each one of us into a relationship with Him

According to our OT reading from Isaiah 42

700 years before this story of Bart – God promised to send His servant Jesus –in

Isaiah 42:7 – through Isaiah - God says - Jesus came – *to open eyes that are*

blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness!

You see – Jesus came to open our eyes to the truth – that we sit in the darkness of our sins – and we are blinded from the truth of God by our sins – and Jesus came to call us out of this darkness into His light.

Jesus can make us see who He really is

And He can make us see the sin and rebellion against God in our lives

And He can and does heal us of this spiritual blindness – by dying on the cross – to get rid of our disease of sin – and heal us – and forgive our sins; if we care to believe He did this for us?

Maybe you are someone here today – sitting there in darkness – spiritually blind – feeling lost and miserable – and Jesus is calling you today!

Don't let Jesus pass by – Bart didn't!

(pause)

Response

What about those of us here this morning that have already put our faith in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour?

What will our **response** be this morning?

Well I'd like to give us **two responses**

[Slide-1st response]

1st response – **let's not get spiritually complacent** – and think we have it all together. Last week we saw - James and John – they were two of Jesus' twelve apostles – and they hardly had it all together – did they?

They had a **blind spot** – their pride and desire for status and recognition and glory.

We all have spiritual blind spots

So, what can we do about these blind spots?

Well - we can pray – and we can use some scripture to help us pray...

We can pray - Psalm 139:23–24 (NIV)

**“Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.”**

This is the perfect prayer for us to ask for spiritual sight — asking God to reveal what we can't see in ourselves – things like pride and religious self-confidence that stop us seeing our need for Jesus. True spiritual sight comes when we humble ourselves in faith before Jesus, like Bart did!

And we can also pray what the Apostle Paul prays in Ephesians 1:18 (NIV)

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you...

This is a prayer for **spiritual sight** — to truly see life through God's perspective, not through our own pride or ambition.

If you're game enough – ask someone at morning tea what your spiritual blind spot is?

2nd response – Also, comes from the Apostle Paul. Now remember before Paul became an Apostle – he was called Saul – and he persecuted Christians – rounding Christians up, arresting them – and some were imprisoned and some were killed. Saul thought he was doing God a favour – because He didn’t know or believe Jesus is God’s Messiah and Saviour of the World. Until one day, Saul had a vision of the risen Jesus on the Road to Damascus – and Jesus chastised Saul for persecuting Christians. Saul was struck blind for 3 days – and then Saul came to know and believe who Jesus really was/is. Then Jesus changed Saul’s name to Paul and gave him a job to do – to go and tell the Gentiles (non-Jews) all about Jesus’ death for sins to be forgiven and all about Jesus’ resurrection for eternal life.

Paul took that job seriously and went all around Asia Minor and Europe telling people about Jesus. In one of Paul’s letters – to the Church in Ephesus – Paul says this – “*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light*” (Ephesians 4:8)

[Slide-2nd response]

So our 2nd response is to **‘live as children of light’** because we were once in the darkness of our sins but now we have been called into the light of Jesus – and He wants us to be His lights in the world.

Living as children of light – corresponds to our Vision at Church – **‘to transform the community with the love of Jesus’**. That means that in everything we say and everything we do – in our lives – we are showing the light and love of Jesus to our community – so they come and follow Jesus too!

Put simply – our job description and response as “*children of light*” is in our passage from Mark 10 – verse 49 – it’s exactly what the disciples said to Bart when Jesus called him over - “*Cheer up! On your feet! Jesus is calling you!*”

[Slide-Witness]

So, perhaps we could write down – some people that we will witness to this week – to whom we will say - “*Cheer up! On your feet! Jesus is calling you!*”

Let’s pray...

We thank You for opening the eyes of Bartimaeus and showing us that You alone can bring true sight. We confess that we are often blind to Your presence, Your purposes, and the needs of others. Please open the eyes of our hearts to see You more clearly, to trust You more deeply, and to follow You more faithfully. Remove our spiritual blindness, Lord, and fill us with the light of Your truth and mercy. Like Bartimaeus, may we rise quickly when You call and walk with You in gratitude and faith. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Benediction

Ephesians 1:18–19 – “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.”

Blessing

Go now as people whose eyes have been opened by Christ.

Walk in His light, see with His compassion, and follow Him on the road that leads to life.

And may the Lord bless you and keep you;

may the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;

may the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. (*Numbers 6:24–26*)

In Jesus Name. Amen.