



Text: Mark 10:46-52<sup>1</sup>

Series: Jesus & ...

Title: Part 2 – Jesus & A Man with a Crying Need

Date: July 12, 2009

Place: First Baptist, Olds, AD

**“The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.” Psalm 34:15**

From 1986 to 1990, Frank Reed was held hostage in a Lebanese cell. For months at a time, Reed was blindfolded, living in complete darkness, or chained to a wall and kept in absolute silence. On one occasion, he was moved to another room, and, although blindfolded, he could sense others in the room. Yet it was three weeks before he dared peek out to discover he was chained next to Terry Anderson and Tom Sutherland.

Although he was beaten, made ill, and tormented, Reed felt most the lack of anyone caring. He said in an interview with Time magazine, *“Nothing I did mattered to anyone. I began to realize how withering it is to exist with not a single expression of caring around [me]... I learned one overriding fact: caring is a powerful force. If no one cares, you are truly alone.”*

As Jesus left the city of Jericho on his way to Jerusalem, he met a man who was truly alone - a man who, like Frank Reed, needed someone to express care for him.

What I want to share with you this morning is very simple. It's simply this: **When we cry to Jesus, he listens. Jesus is attentive to our cry.**

- We need to know that the Lord wants us to call on him for mercy
- We need to know how attentive Jesus is to us when we cry out to him.

If you're like me, you've wondered at times whether God is listening to you or cares about you. This story shows how Jesus always responds to a cry for help.

You're never alone

He always listens and cares

Before I read the text this morning, I want to set up the story we're about to encounter, to give you a sense of the emotional tone of the passage.

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem and he had things on his mind. The people around him were on their way to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem and they were

---

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission, All rights reserved.



in a mood to celebrate! But Jesus had other things on his mind. He was going to Jerusalem to die on the cross. Ahead lay betrayal, torture, death on the cross. Ahead lay a task that would break his spirit in the Garden of Gethsemane and bring him to cry out to his Father. His spirit was beginning to feel the weight of what awaited him in Jerusalem.

Have you ever been in that kind of situation? Everyone around you is celebrating something but you've got other things on your mind.

Several years ago I performing a wedding for a couple but my heart was somewhere else. Everyone at the wedding had nothing but joy on their hearts. I performed my task faithfully and no one there knew anything about what was happening inside me. But you see, the night before the wedding I received a phone call telling me that one of the young men who had been a part of my youth group in Toronto had been killed in a motorcycle accident. As I performed my duties at the wedding my head was on the task but my heart was somewhere else. Even though I was surrounded by joy, I was experiencing deep sorrow. But I had to focus on the task at hand and put my sorrow aside for a time.

Jesus was in a situation like that. Everyone around him had their hearts and minds set on Jerusalem and celebration. Jesus had his mind set on Jerusalem and the cross. Jesus might have had cause to be distracted by the anticipation of the events that lay ahead, but when a cry rings out from the side of the road he is immediately present to the situation. He put aside the thoughts about the cross and attended to the immediate situation.

As he and the disciples, together with the growing crowd, were leaving the city of Jericho, a voice cried out...

**"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Mark 10:47**

It came from a man sitting along the side of the road. He wasn't joining with the joyful march to Jerusalem. Life, in so many ways, was passing him by. He was blind. His name was "Bartimaeus."

He was a poor man. He was "begging" - unable to provide for himself through work. Beggars at the road side were a common sight in Jesus' day and still are in many parts of the world. The blind and lame and the diseased depended on common charity for their livelihood.

Bartimaeus had chosen to sit in this spot today because he knew the Passover pilgrims were usually generous, like Christmas shoppers tend to be in our day. But Bartimaeus heard something unusual in the sound of the crowd passing him by. The crowd was more excited than unusual. He scavenged bits and pieces and snatches of conversation from the crowd just like he scavenged his living from the people who streamed by him.



SUDDENLY, a name, heard again and again from different voices: "Jesus," "Jesus of Nazareth." Bartimaeus realized: JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS IN THIS CROWD!

Bartimaeus had heard of this "Jesus." Some said he was the Messiah, the Promised One of God who had come to save His people from the Romans. Some said he was a wonderful teacher who taught with the authority of the Spirit of God. But what had grabbed Bartimaeus' attention were the stories of healing, especially the healing of the blind!

Now, Jesus was somewhere nearby - this was his big chance, perhaps his last chance! He yelled out...

**"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"**

Now, pilgrims expected beggars to beg - it was all part of the pilgrimage event. BUT the unspoken "rule" was that they keep their place and not be a nuisance. They weren't supposed to dampen the joy of those around them by demanding too much attention for themselves.

The Bible tells us that...

**"many rebuked him, telling him to be silent." Mark 10:48**

"Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet" (v.48) -- that's Bible language for "Shut up!" But Bartimaeus wasn't going to be denied! With even greater intensity he cried out...

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

And the Scripture says: **"Jesus stopped...." (v.49)**

Let's read the whole little story in **Mark 10:46-52**

**Mark 10:46** 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. <sup>47</sup> 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!' <sup>48</sup> And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' <sup>49</sup> And Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.' <sup>50</sup> And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. <sup>51</sup> 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.' <sup>52</sup> And 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.”**

Bartimaeus' cry stopped Jesus in his tracks - no wonder, it must have been heart-wrenching! What he heard was exactly the kind of cry that every parent has heard one time or another - it's that soul-piercing call for help that our children can make. It's different from all other cries!

Those of you who are parents know exactly what I mean! It was a "I REALLY need help NOW!" kind of cry.

The word that Mark uses here to describe the man's shout can be translated, "to cry out, to scream or shriek" - it's an intense shout from the gut!

Sometimes the intensity comes from the need to express **incredible joy**. In Mark 11:9 Mark used it to describe the songs of the pilgrims who sing "Hosanna" as Jesus enters Jerusalem.

Sometimes the intensity comes from the need to express **deep rage**. In Mark 15:14 the same crowd that sang "Hosanna" cried, "Crucify Him!"

Sometimes the intensity comes from the need to express **profound misery**. In Mark 15:39 (v.34) Jesus cries out "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me!"

Scripture tells us that the Lord is attentive to the cry of his people. King David tells us in Psalm 34 that...

**“When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.” Psalm 34:17**

In fact, there's an awful lot of "shouting" and "crying" to the Lord in the Psalms.

Sometimes it's an expression of joy...

**“Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!” Psalm 95:1**

But usually it's an expression of distress...

**“Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears!” Psalm 39:12**



God wants his people to call out him - to cry their pain to Him and to shout out their joy to Him! But the people didn't want Bartimaeus to "cry out" to the Lord. They told him to be quiet but Jesus "stopped" and listened.

Today this rebuke usually doesn't come from someone else. Usually we rebuke ourselves and tell ourselves to stop making a fuss.

- **"I'd be so embarrassed - what would others think?"**

That rebuke is rooted in pride and the fear of man. Bartimaeus didn't care about those things! Years of humiliation at the road side had seen to that!

- **"I don't want to bother Jesus with this - I'll handle it myself."**

That, too, is rooted in pride. Bartimaeus knew he couldn't handle it himself!

- **"I don't want to bother Jesus with this - it's such a small thing."**

In our eyes, blindness looks like a "big" thing. To us, it is, but to Jesus, it isn't! That rebuke is rooted in a false perspective. Let me ask you: What in your life would you think is "big" for Jesus? To the One who created the entire universe, is there anything in our lives that is "big" to Him? NO, but He cares for everything!

- **"I don't want to be disappointed again - I'd rather not bring it to Him."**

There's a lot of pain and a lot of history in this self-rebuke. I'm not going to try to give a quick answer to this objection. But if you've cried to the LORD and felt that He didn't hear I just invite you to meditate on 2 Corinthians 12:8 as a starting point.

The Apostle Paul testified that...

**"2 Corinthians 12:7 So to keep me from becoming conceited ... a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Corinthians 12:7-9**

Paul "pleaded" with the LORD three times to take away his "thorn in the flesh," whatever it was, but God had another plan for Paul's life. An anonymous poet captured the spirit of Paul's revelation in a piece simply titled, **"I Asked."**



**"I asked God for strength, that I might achieve.  
I was made weak, that I might learn to humbly obey...  
I asked for health, that I might do greater things.  
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things...  
I asked for riches, that I might be happy.  
I was given poverty, that I might be wise...  
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men.  
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God...  
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.  
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things...  
I got nothing I asked for - but everything I had hoped for.  
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.  
I am, among all, most richly blessed!"**

Bartimaeus didn't let potential disappointment stop him from bringing his need to the Lord. Jesus heard his cry and answered.

When we cry to the Lord, we call on him for "mercy," as Bartimaeus did. We have no claim on his favour, but we know that He is merciful and His mercies are "new every morning" and so we "wait" for Him. (Lamentations 3:22-24) ***Paul cried three times until the Lord satisfied his heart, not by taking away his "thorn," but by teaching him that his weakness could be used to reveal the grace of God that sustained him in the midst of trouble.***

Whatever reason we've developed for holding back, **Jesus still waits, ready to listen to our cry for mercy.** From His example we can learn how to listen to others, but this morning I want us to just focus on how He listens to us. I don't want to load you up with guilt for not being a good listener like Jesus. I don't want to burden you down with "homework" today. We should seek to be like Him but this morning I want to set Jesus before you and encourage you to cry out to Him because He's listening to you. Let me share four things I see in Jesus.

**First ...**

**Jesus is never too busy or pre-occupied to stop and listen to someone in need.**

Jesus had things on this mind and the crowd was flowing away from Jericho toward Jerusalem BUT Jesus went against the flow of circumstances to listen to Bartimaeus.

**"Jesus stopped" (v.49)**

It's hard to stop and respond to the needs around us. We live in a very fast paced world. So many times I've found myself running too fast to stop and listen with



care and I know that I'm not alone. Chuck Swindoll confesses to the same difficulty in his book, Stress Fractures:

*"I vividly remember some time back being caught in the undertow of too many commitments in too few days," he wrote. "It wasn't long before I was snapping at my wife and our children, choking down my food at mealtimes, and feeling irritated at those unexpected interruptions through the day. Before long, things around our home started reflecting the pattern of my hurry-up style. It was becoming unbearable. I distinctly recall after supper one evening the words of our younger daughter, Colleen. She wanted to tell me about something important that had happened to her at school that day. She hurriedly began, "Daddy-I-wanna-tell-you-somethin'-and-I'll-tell-you-really-fast." Suddenly realizing her frustration, I answered, "Honey, you can tell me... and you don't have to tell me really fast. Say it slowly." I'll never forget her answer: "Then listen slowly."*

Jesus always "listens slowly" to us! In fact, he stops completely to listen to us.

### **Second ...**

**Jesus focused one on one with the person who was speaking to him.**

**"...Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.' And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus." Mark 10:49-50**

Jesus called him out of the crowd and give him his particular attention. By calling him into his presence, Jesus was telling this man, "I care for you."

Those who communicated Jesus' message to Bartimaeus caught a sense of the blessing that Jesus' attention brought to this man: "Take heart ... he is calling you." (v.49) "Cheer up! Jesus cares! He's heard you! He wants to meet with you!"

When Bartimaeus heard this, he "sprang up" to get to Jesus. His life had already been infused with the grace of Jesus ... and he was still blind! There was life in his spirit and a spring in his step that hadn't been there only moments before.

But when we give people our full attention we communicate that we care about them and **Jesus always gives us His full attention.**

### **Third ...**

**Jesus gives us dignity us by asking us what we want**

**"Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?'" Mark 10:51**



Strange question, isn't it? The man is blind! He's begging! What would you expect him to ask for?

Jesus, who knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, would clearly have known what he wanted, but Jesus encouraged him to express himself and share what was really on his heart. Although this was a conversation by the side of the road, what was really happening was more like prayer than chit chat.

One of the great mysteries of prayer is that although Jesus knows what we need before we ask for it, (Matthew 6:8) he still invites us to make our requests known to him. Why? Because by inviting us to ask he gives us the dignity of being responsible beings created in the image of God. He gives us the opportunity to express our faith in Him.

Bartimaeus had lived for years with people assuming they knew what he needed. Every day a few people tossed some coins his way, never asking him what he thought or cared about. He was de-humanized! Nobody listened to HIM - they saw him simply as a beggar and beggars just wanted money.

One of the lessons I've taken from Jesus' question to Bartimaeus is that whenever someone asks me to pray for them I ask them, "how can I pray for you?" Whenever the Deacons are invited by someone to come and pray for healing, I ask the same question: "How can we pray for you?" I don't assume I know what is on their heart. I give them an opportunity to express it to us so that we can bring it to the Lord.

One of the most dignifying things we can do is to ask a person questions like:

"What would you like me to do?"

"What do you think?"

"How do you feel about this?"

**Fourth ...**

**Jesus responded to a personal request ... and he always does!**

**"And 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." Mark 10:52**

Jesus hears his request, "I want to see," and grants his healing.

I know you have had my experience - so many times we pray and we think the Lord isn't listening. This morning I want to suggest to you that the real problem isn't that the Lord isn't listening when we call on Him. The real problem is that we're often not listening when He answers.



Sometimes the reason we think God isn't listening to us isn't because we haven't heard God when he has answered. Sometimes the reason is because we're not satisfied with His answer.

Earlier this morning I shared the poem, "I Asked." I want to share another poem that I received from someone in this congregation a few years ago. It's almost identical, but with a slight difference. It's called, "**And God Said, 'No.'**":

**"I asked God to take away my pride. And God said, "No."  
He said it was not for him to take away, but for me to give it up.  
I asked God to make my handicapped child whole. And God said, "No."  
He said her spirit was whole, but her body was only temporary.  
I asked God to grant me patience. And God said, "No."  
He said patience is a by-product of tribulations. It isn't granted, it's earned.  
I asked God to give me happiness. And God said, "No."  
He said He gives me blessings - happiness is up to me.  
I asked God to spare me pain. And God said, "No."  
He said suffering draws you apart from worldly cares to bring you closer to me.  
I asked God to make my spirit grow. And God said, "No."  
He said I must grow on my own. But he will prune me to make me fruitful.  
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life. And God said, "No."  
He said I will give you life that you may enjoy all things.  
I asked God to help me love others as much as he loves me.  
And God said, "Ah, finally you have the idea."**

When we submit our requests to the Lord we need to simply recognize that that is exactly what they are – requests. They are **not** orders or demands or obligations that he is required to grant. They are requests and one of the basic postures that must accompany our requests is the posture of humility. We place ourselves under the mercy of God and in submission to His will.

One of the best books I've ever read on the life of prayer is Bryan Chapell's book, *Praying Backwards*. The title caught my attention and the subtitle amplifies the meaning: *Transform Your Prayer Life By Beginning In Jesus' Name*. Praying "in Jesus' name" means praying in a way that flows from the will, purpose and character of Jesus. One of the most important prayer lessons we learn from Jesus is a trust in our Father's mercy and goodness that expresses itself in a firm belief that He knows what is best for us, even though we may not understand his will and purpose for our lives. We tell him what we want AND we humbly submit to what he chooses to give us. Jesus prayed...

**"My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." Matthew 26:39**



Bryan Chapell shared a letter that a woman had written to encourage a friend who was struggling with cancer and I want to close this morning by reading it for us. The woman wrote...

*"Dear Susan,*

*My husband just had his second malignant brain tumor removed last Monday. He has a very aggressive stage four melanoma that has spread to his brain twice in two months. We are truly in God's hands now.*

*I am writing to lift your family up in prayer as you journey through your illness. You probably have already seen God's plan for you and your family as you face your cancer. He has marked you with a special blessing and standing in his Son Jesus Christ. You are literally illuminating and basking in His Divine Grace at this time.*

*With our earthly minds, it is difficult to understand the need and place for the type of suffering that goes with this illness. However, you will see and feel with your heavenly hearts that all of God's Glory is being revealed in your lives. You will experience true spiritual oneness with Jesus Christ.*

*Our Creator has opened a rare window of opportunity for your family to live in total and complete submission to God's will. Most of us take life for granted, encumbered by the trappings and distractions of this planet and never fully enjoy the presence of the Living Saviour in our lives. That is about to change for you. A window has been opened for you all to look into heaven, and see God in his Glory and Majesty. Despite your sadness, you will be thrilled by the incredible joy that being selected for his special gift brings. I am there, and I know.*

*God is hearing your prayers as I write this. He tells us, 'I will change your darkness into light and make the rough places smooth: I will not forsake you.' Claim these truths as your combat gear to fight this illness.*

*Through love, prayer and submission to our Lord, you and your family will find the grace, peace and strength to carry you through each day. Easy for humans? Of course not. But easy for God? Yes, yes, yes. Give all of your worries and fears to God because He is holding on to all of you right now with all of his might. You are loved by God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit on earth today and throughout eternity.*

*In His love,  
A Christian Sister.'<sup>2</sup>*

---

<sup>2</sup> As quoted in Bryan Chapell, *Praying Backwards*, Grand Rapids: Baker Boos, 2005, p. 151-152



Jesus is here today. He asks you and me: **"What do you want me to do for you?"**

Your "cry" doesn't have to be loud or tearful, but it does need to come from the heart! Remember: When we cry, He listens. He's listening right now for you.

- Invitation to Prayer Ministry**
- Final Song:** What a Friend We Have In Jesus
- Benediction**