

1. Saving Faith Recognizes its Absolute Need
 - a. Why does Luke mention Jesus' last healing here?
 - i. Showing that spiritual blindness to the necessity of Jesus death and resurrection takes a miracle – **the disciples didn't understand what he meant in vv31-34**
 1. 2 Cor 3:14 – veil of darkness over hearts – only in Christ is it taken away
 2. This is why Jericho is mentioned – as Jesus frees them and takes them into the Promised Land, they are poor, pitiful, blind, naked without Him
 - ii. **Showing that overcoming absolute need with the necessity of Jesus' determined march to Jerusalem is only dependence upon Him for EVERYTHING**
 - b. Blind
 - i. This juxtaposes him with the rich young ruler
 1. Powerful vs. Powerless
 2. The ruler had all things, even sight, but was spiritually blind and would not depend upon Jesus for all, and went away sad, unwilling to follow Jesus, with no praise for God
 - ii. This man had nothing, not even sight, but had absolute need and corresponding dependence upon Jesus brought him everything *and he doesn't go away, but follows Jesus rejoicing and praising God*
 - c. Begging
 - i. Dependent like an infant
 1. He had to depend upon others to tell him what the ruckus was about
 2. He had to be led to a place, and had to beg and rely upon the compassion and beneficence of others
 - ii. Absolute need in juxtaposition to the young ruler strong in wealth
 1. Jesus is hope for the one who has nothing worth clinging to
2. Saving Faith is Desperately Bold
 - a. He hears and responds to the presence of Jesus
 - i. He listens to the change in the crowd noise when Jesus approaches and inquires about the excitement
 - ii. The crowd told him that Jesus was "passing by", giving no indication of stopping, but this man doesn't accept this possibility, but cries out to stop Jesus, "Deal with me in mercy!"
 - b. Shouts
 - i. He is not content with timidity, knowing the greatness of his need
 - ii. He refuses to be silenced or coerced into quietness
 - iii. He knows that he desperately needs help and that Jesus can help him
 - iv. He, ironically, *sees* the real identity of Jesus
 1. The crowd sees Jesus, the Nazarene
 2. The blind man sees Jesus, the Son of David
 - a. see the faith in this transition, perception of this needy man
 - b. He sees not only a prophet from northern Israel, but the Messiah, the hope of Israel, the promised King
 - c. Ironically, the crowd was actually blind, and the man had true sight
 - c. Asks for mercy
 - i. He shouts aloud, crying out *to Jesus as His Rescuer*
 - ii. He is unashamed for his desperate need and full of faith that Jesus can restore Him
 - d. Desperation for wholeness
 - i. This word "mercy" is different than the tax collector of earlier in chapter 18

1. Means "to meet someone's need with compassionate satisfaction"
 2. Doesn't necessarily have to do with sin, but with need, in this case "blindness"
 - ii. When told to be silent, he shouted "much more"!
 - iii. Desperation doesn't give up, but gets louder, knocking and knocking on the door, knowing that there is no hope unless God acts
 - iv. Desperation doesn't care what others see or hear or think or value, only what Jesus sees, hears, thinks, and values!
 - e. He is honest with Jesus – no manipulation or appeal to his own righteousness
 - i. When Jesus asks what he wants, he is plain: "I want to see again"
 - ii. This "again" is important. He had lost his sight, he knew his loss, he felt his need, it was consciously before him.
 - iii. He knew that dependence was the only way to approach Jesus, setting him apart from the rich young ruler, the Pharisee, and even the disciples who tried to silence the children and to silence him.
3. Jesus Actively Responds to Desperate Faith in Him
- a. He stops
 - i. **Unlike what the crowd assumed, Jesus stops what he's doing** and takes the time to hear and express compassion to the weak man
 - ii. What kind of powerful man is this, who stops an entire entourage to serve a blind, obnoxious, obstinate beggar?
 - iii. **Do you believe that Jesus would "stop" for you if you cried out to him for mercy, acknowledging His kingship over you?**
 - b. He commands the crowd to bring the man to him
 - i. This is corrective to the crowd, and somewhat ironic that those telling the man to be silent because Jesus was too important were now being put in the place of serving the man
 - ii. Jesus has turned the tables on the powerful and made them eat a bit of crow and, like him, humble themselves to serve the weak
 - c. "See again!"
 - i. **Or, "Look up!" – HOPE!**
 1. Jesus restores what had been broken, a signal to all that He is the remaker of the broken things, the one who will make all the sad come untrue
 2. **Now, this is a sign of Jesus' ultimate salvation, from the wrath of God, bringing the outsider near, the one in darkness into the light**
 - ii. There is a spiritual truth here as well
 1. Spiritual Blindness of All:
 - a. **"And the light shined into the darkness, but the darkness did not comprehend it" (John 1:5)**
 - b. **"And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. (Joh 3:19 ESV)**
 2. God opens the eyes of the elect
 - a. **"For God...is the one who has shone into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." (2 Cor 4:6)**
 - b. **"...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy ones in light, for He has rescued you from the domain of darkness and transferred you to the kingdom of His beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Col 1:12-14)**
 3. All who come to Christ as Savior-King, in absolute need, are children of light

- a. [God sent Paul] “to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.(Acts 26:18)
 - b. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. (1Th 5:5 ESV)
 - iii. Only Christ can open such blinded eyes
 - d. "Your dependence [upon me] has made you well"
 - i. Jesus' desire is this kind of dependence and the result of such dependence is salvation
 - ii. This is the goal!
 - 1. Our goal is not healing, but sight that trusts and follows Jesus!
 - a. Even if we are not healed, will we depend upon Jesus, the Son of David, the King over all?
 - b. **If we will not entrust ourselves to him when he says “no”, then we don’t love him, but are using him**
 - c. “Idolatry is when you worship what you should use, and use what you should worship.” – G.K. Chesterton
 - 2. Dependence upon Jesus, trust in His goodness and in His word
 - a. Asking for all things in Christ Jesus because we know that all things belong to Him
 - b. Trusting in the One stopped his own heart that ours might beat again.
 - iii. Remember that this takes place near Jericho, and it is the only city mentioned by Luke in this trip towards Jerusalem
 - 1. The dependence that trusts the word of the Lord will march 7 times around the city and shout
 - 2. No matter how powerless it makes you in the eyes of the world, or foolish, or seemingly ignorant, you trust His word
 - 3. **AND SEE THE WORK OF GOD WHEN WALLS FALL DOWN FLAT**
 - a. Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." (Joh 6:29 ESV)
 - iv. Physical wholeness is promised to all who follow Jesus to the end, but only in the **resurrection, when he proclaims, “Behold, I am making all things new.”** (Rev 21:5)
 - 1. So take hope in the resurrected King, you sufferers!
 - 2. He is returning to set things completely right, but for now, draw near to him by **dependence and follow wherever he might lead you, even unto death (for it can’t touch you, anyway!)**
4. Jesus is Everything for the Desperate
 - a. "He followed Him"
 - i. Jesus rules Him and he submits to Jesus as his Master and King
 - ii. He depends upon Jesus not merely for his physical sight, but for his life!
 - 1. He will not even trust his own eyes, but only what Jesus says and does
 - 2. **“I will not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name”** (The Solid Rock)
 - a. **This means that I don’t trust even the best things, the most wonderful feelings, the sweetest moments of ecstasy, but only what He has said**
 - b. His authority, His word, His promise, His definitions, His lead, His commands, Him alone
 - iii. This is the result of true saving dependence: *everything entrusted* to Jesus.
 - 1. **“for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as**

children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. (Eph 5:8-11 ESV)

2. Saving faith walks in submission to Christ Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, endeavoring to please the Lord.
- b. His glorifying pursuit of Jesus led others to speak well of God
 - i. Praise: to speak good words of
 - c. This shows us that the real healing **wasn't the physical wholeness, but the spiritual oneness with Jesus: nearness to the Lord**
 - i. What about when Jesus doesn't heal our infirmities now?
 - ii. Does this kind of healing always happen for believers?
 1. Why or why not?
 - iii. If the Lord withholds physical wholeness in this life, it is not because of weak faith or faithlessness
 1. This is a false conclusion: simply because this man's faith(dependence) was genuine and Jesus is showing, in juxtaposition to others in the immediate context, that dependence is the only way to wholeness, does not imply that every dependence will bring about this wholeness
 - a. Examples: Paul's eyesight (Gal 6:11), thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12:7), illness to preach to the Galatians (Gal 4:13; probably seeking higher ground away from the swamps of the lower lands), Epaphroditus' near-death illness (Phil 2:25-27), Timothy's frequent stomach ailments (1 Tim 5:23), Trophimus left in Miletus sick (2 Tim 4:20)
 - b. Jesus suffered greatly from physical pain, hunger, weakness, and death not because of weak faith in the Father, but because of great faith in the Father
 - i. "Not my will, but Yours be done"
 2. Sometimes our suffering, illness, hunger, and even death is the will of God *for our spiritual good to draw us near to the Lord in weakness*
 - a. There will be a healing for the Christian, at the resurrection to glory, but it is not promised until then
 - b. When the Lord does heal, we are to be thankful for his immediate mercy, but knowing that it is mercy and not owed to us as His children
 - d. He followed *glorifying God*
 - i. God received grateful recognition that He alone is good, glorious, and worthy of all applause!
 1. This is the goal of all that God does
 2. This may mean that God will use our suffering for His glory, just like He did for Jesus and the apostles
 - ii. God is the weighty one, not this man, or even his health or healing, but God and His desires
 - iii. Faith recognizes that only God is good and that only God is worthy and that any good which comes to us comes solely from the gracious provision of the glorious God

This passage is about showing the necessity of absolute dependence upon Jesus for EVERYTHING, even the present suffering and future hopes of all things. It is only by dependence that we can approach Jesus, never by our own strength, righteousness, or performance. In the light of the disciples' ignorance of Jesus' immediately preceding statement predicting his own rejection, suffering, death, and resurrection, we see a blind beggar and a tax collector coming to him with absolute dependence because they recognize that they are WEAK.

And God is GOOD! Jesus stops to hear our cries. He answers us in our oppression of slavery and leads us out of the slavery of Egypt, through the sea of Death, conquers the enemy of our soul, reveals His glorious Word to us, and flattens the walls of our desperate need with the provision of His grace to lead us into the Promised Land. You see, Jericho beckons the Exodus, and not merely the Exodus, but the entrance into the Promised Land. Jesus is going to the cross to bring us home to the land where we will dwell with God in light.

At the cross Jesus didn't just stop to listen and heal, he stopped his very heart that you and might be given the hope of eternal life with God. He died to raise our dead hearts to life, to resurrect dead souls, not merely to bring physical health, but to bring spiritual life, hope, peace with God. You see, we weren't merely blind beggars, morally neutral, but we were enemies of God, crying not for mercy, but for his head, "crucify him!" Yet, in that moment of absolute rejection, Jesus called out, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing!" What does this mercy call out of your heart?! What does this wondrous love draw forth from the heart of the wretch now called the beloved of God?! How shall we respond to His stopping and raising our dead hearts to life? Shall we praise Him?! Shall we speak of His goodness, His absolute goodness that we should be called sons and daughters of God, beloved God-belonging children in whom His soul delights?! All because Jesus stopped and God shone into our darkened hearts even before we ever cried out for mercy, he was already coming to save the day. This is amazing grace!

“For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. ⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. ¹¹ For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life in you. ¹³ Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴ knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. (2Co 4:5-14 ESV)