

# Recover Your Sight

Luke 18:35-43

Key Verse: 42 “And Jesus said to him, ‘Recover your sight; your faith has made you well.’”

In today’s passage, Jesus restores the eyes of a blind beggar near Jericho. However, the last verse from the previous passage, verse 34, provides us with the immediate context of today’s miracle, “But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.” Jesus’ disciples were spiritually blind. They couldn’t really see who Jesus was, and couldn’t understand the purpose and meaning of Jesus’ impending death in Jerusalem. What a huge problem this would be! The disciples were to be Jesus’ gospel witnesses to the whole world. But when we study this passage, we see Jesus, who opens the eyes of the physically blind and completely changes his direction of life. And Jesus will surely open the eyes of the spiritually blind disciples. Through this message, let us see how Jesus helps us to recover our sight.

## I. Jesus recovers a blind man’s sight (35-43).

Look at verse 35a. “As Jesus drew near to Jericho...” Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem began in Luke 9:51, which says, “When the days drew near for him to be taken, he set his face to Jerusalem.” And now Jesus was finally at Jericho, only 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jericho had deep historical meaning to the Jews. 1,400 years earlier, when Joshua and the Israelites entered Canaan to conquer the promised land, they first had to defeat the great and impenetrable walled city of Jericho. Now Jesus, which in Hebrew is Joshua—meaning, “God saves,” was coming with his band of disciples to claim the promised land! How excited the disciples and crowds must have been! Jesus was coming to restore the Kingdom of Israel and to defeat all the enemies of the Jews!

In Jesus’ time, Jericho was no longer a heavily fortified city. It was an oasis, the “City of Palm Trees.” Herod the Great built his winter palace near here because of its warmth and fresh springs. Since Jericho catered to the rich and powerful, homeless outcasts often lined the roads because it was a good place to encounter wealthy traders and the political elite.

Look at verse 35b. “...a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging.” As Jesus approached Jericho, he did not encounter a formidable physical wall. Rather, Jesus, the Savior, encountered a blind beggar, unable to see, living in perpetual darkness.

Who was this blind man? He was poor and marginalized. He was nameless, homeless, and an object of both pity and scorn. However, from the fact that he was sitting by the roadside near the wealthy city of Jericho, he struggled hard to survive. He knew the best spots and times to beg.

He especially looked forward to Passover season and the generous pilgrims who would pass through. After finding the best spot, he made a pathetic face, and shouted, ‘Alms for the blind!’ Soon he heard copper coins dropping into his begging bowl. This brought him a secret smile of happiness that helped him to forget his blindness for a moment.

This blind man can represent two groups of people in the world. Firstly, people with all their present problems, do their best to survive in this competitive world. They have their own limits but each day they struggle to do their best to live a better life. They focus on their immediate dos and don’ts. From time to time they smile at small successes, a better job, a new car and a house. Such a life looks normal. However, there is something missing in their lives. 2 Corinthians 4:4 says, “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” They do not see the glory of God in Jesus. They are spiritually blind and ignorant of Jesus, living in spiritual darkness, unable to see the light of Christ. In the previous passage, a rich ruler was blinded and left very sad, full of darkness, because of his love of wealth.

There is another group of blind people. Jesus’ disciples saw God in Jesus and followed him leaving everything behind. They saw that he was an amazing teacher, shepherd, and miracle maker. They knew that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. However, they never agreed with the true work of the Messiah through his death and resurrection. They were fixed with their own plans and visions of glory. The more Jesus predicted his suffering on his way to Jerusalem, the more they closed their minds. In Luke 18: 34b, Luke says, “they did not grasp what he said.” They were spiritually blind! Similarly for the first 7 months of this year, after being removed from the payroll as staff, though I was a Christian, thick darkness hovered over my mind filling me with complaints and blaming others. I could not see God and I could not understand what God was doing. I was spiritually blind. Before we see how Jesus opened the eyes of his disciples and mine, let’s learn about how Jesus opened a blind man’s eyes.

The blind man was sitting by the roadside toward Jericho begging. As expected, pilgrims were passing by him. Look at verse 36a. “And hearing a crowd going by...” All of sudden, he heard the ear-splitting noise of a large group of people. He could have used this opportunity to shout louder, ‘Alms, please!’ However, in verse 36b. “... he inquired what this meant.” He put aside his begging business. The crowd told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.”

Now look at verse 37. “And he cried out, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’” There are several things we can learn from his cry. Firstly, the blind beggar had spiritual eyes to SEE who Jesus truly is. He had spiritual eyes to see that this Jesus was the Son of David, the promised Messiah. In contrast, the crowd saw him only as “Jesus of Nazareth,” who lived among the poor. When he heard it was Jesus from Nazareth, all the stories that he had overheard about Jesus’ healing and preaching passed through his mind like lightning. Surely, Jesus is more than an

ordinary man— he is the Son of David, who alone can heal the sick, the lepers, and even raise the dead! Secondly, in his cry, we can see his faith in the power and mercy of Jesus. He knew that he was utterly powerless; he could not heal himself. But he had faith to believe that the promised Messiah, the Son of David, would have mercy on him, a wretched blind beggar. He also had faith to believe that the Son of David has power and authority to heal, even the blind like him! Thirdly, he acted with faith. As his long dormant hope came to life like an active volcano, he began to cry out desperately but confidently, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

When the blind man cried out, however, those who were in front of the crowd rebuked him, telling him to be silent. Some may have been Jesus’ disciples. Upon being rebuked, what did the blind man do? Did he get discouraged and stop? Look at verse 39b. “*But* he cried out *all the more*, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” He did not give in to their harsh rebuke. He knew it was his last chance: a few seconds later Jesus might pass by forever. The more severely rebuked, the more desperately he cried out, louder and louder, again and again.

Similarly, when we cry to Jesus for his mercy, many times there are hindrances, discouragements and persecutions. We are tempted to become ashamed, to give up, to stop crying out. But like his man, all the more persistently we are to cry out, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” May God give us such faith that cries out all the more, cries out louder, with more perseverance!

Look at verse 40. “And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him.” When the man sought the Messiah with all his heart and with great perseverance, Jesus completely stopped in his tracks, and commanded the man to be brought to him. Jeremiah 29:13 says, “You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.” God promises us that when we seek him we will find him. Praise Jesus who fulfills God’s promise to be found by those who seek him with all their heart! Praise Jesus who stops in his tracks and calls us to him when we cry out to him for his mercy!

When the man was brought near to him, Jesus, the Messiah, began intimately talking with him as if they were only two people in the whole world. He asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” Upon seeing him, Jesus didn’t ask, ‘What do you want?’ Instead he asked him, “What do you want *me to do for you?*” Why did Jesus ask him this specific question?

In order to answer this question, the blind man had to think about two things: The first and most important thing he needed to think about was: who was Jesus to him? And what was Jesus willing to do for him? What was Jesus able to do for him? If the blind man truly believed that Jesus was all-powerful, the Son of God, he could ask what only the Son of God could do. For only God, the Almighty creator, can open the eyes of the blind. And if the blind man believed that the Son of David is all merciful, loving, and kind, then this blind man could believe that Jesus would

have mercy on him, a pitiful blind beggar. When we find Jesus, the crucial question we must ask ourselves is: Who is Jesus to me? Is he my genie who exists to make me happy? Is he the Almighty Creator God who created the heavens and the earth, or is able to do only what we think is humanly possible? And what about his character- Is Jesus truly merciful and loving to me? In other words, do I truly believe that Jesus is both willing and able to do what seems impossible for me?

Secondly, when Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” the blind man had to think about what he really wanted. Based on his words, “Let me recover my sight,” it seems that the man must have lost his sight at some point. Upon losing his sight, he must have been angry, fearful and doubtful. He despaired. A job was unthinkable! Marriage? Forget it! He had no other choice but to beg daily in order to survive at the bottom of the Jewish world. After years of blindness and begging and disappointment, he had lost any hope of ever seeing again. He had learned to accept his miserable lot in life. But now, did he have enough faith and courage to ask Jesus to do something that he had considered impossible for a long time? Or would he ask Jesus for something more realistic, and less disappointing if Jesus said no?

Look at verse 41b. “He said, ‘Let me recover my sight.’” This man put all the pieces about Jesus together and came to a conclusion that Jesus was HIS personal merciful, almighty and willing Messiah. And he wanted Jesus, his Messiah, to recover his sight. It was not just a selfish wish. It was a prayer request that fulfilled the promises and work of the Messiah from the Old Testament (cf Isaiah 42:7). “...to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in the darkness.” It was a prayer request of faith and trust in the mercy and power of Christ. It was a prayer request that would glorify and reveal Jesus as the promised Messiah, the true Son of David.

How did Jesus bless him? Let’s read verse 42. “And Jesus said to him, ‘Recover your sight; your faith has made you well.’” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

So, when the man engaged in a personal relationship with Christ, what did Jesus give him? First, Jesus answered his prayer saying, “Recover your sight,” and immediately the man recovered his sight. Praise Jesus— Jesus restored his physical sight! This man could see the crowds, the palm trees of Jericho, and could see physical Jesus. However, Jesus gave him more than physical sight. This man’s spiritual eyes were opened. He could see Jesus as HIS promised Messiah and as GOD’s promised Messiah. Secondly, Jesus valued his faith and helped him to grow in his faith. Jesus said, “Your faith has made you well.” Praise Jesus who helped him step by step to grow in his faith in the Messiah, until he could believe that Jesus could and would recover his sight. Thirdly, Jesus made him well through his faith. Even more than restoration of physical and spiritual sight, this man was made well and was saved. He had been a blind beggar. But Jesus restored him fully as a precious child of God and true disciple of Jesus. Unlike the rich man who left sad, this former

blind man began to follow Jesus and glorify God with his whole being. He became a living witness and testimony to all the people, so that all people began praising God.

## II. Jesus recovered his disciples' sight

What then is the specific purpose for this miracle of Jesus for his disciples? In verse 34, the author Luke commented that they understood none of these things. They could not SEE and understand the true work of the messiah, who would suffer and die, and rise again on the third day to conquer sin and death. But just as they stood next to Jesus and the blind man, listening and witnessing everything, Jesus also would help his disciples to "Recover their sight." But it took a long time. When we read up to Luke 24, even after his Resurrection they were spiritually blind. But Jesus didn't abandon them. Jesus suffered, was crucified, was buried, and rose again on the third day for them. And then, he visited them in person, eating with them, letting them touch his wounds, and taught them the scriptures. Only then, in Luke 24:45-46 Luke says, "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are my witnesses of all these things.'" What Jesus did to the blind man saying, "Recover your sight," was exactly what Jesus did for his disciples. He recovered their sight so that they could understand his real identity as the Savior and Son of David who would defeat the ultimate enemy of Satan. He would empower them to live as witnesses of the full gospel.

Similarly, for me, over the last 7 months, sometimes I didn't feel I was a Christian as I spoke words of frustration and complaints. One day, I realized that the title of pastor and the church had been my idols and security, and that they had made me blind. But when they were removed from my life, I felt that my umbilical cord was cut off. But Jesus, with his grace, led me to his cross. There I crucified my idols, and he reconnected me with him. I began to drink his blood and eat his flesh as my true drink and food. As I renewed my faith in my Lord and Savior Jesus, my spiritual sight was recovered. I could see Jesus as my only Savior and Messiah. From then on, I began to see the church leaders with the eyes of love and respect. I could find great joy in following Jesus and glorifying his name, no matter my titles or circumstances. Amen.

"What do you think Lord Jesus Christ wants to do for you?" He says, "Recover your sight!" He may or may not change your problems and issues. But he certainly wants us to recover our spiritual sight more each day.

May Jesus enable us to keep crying out persistently for the Messiah's mercy and with faith. May Jesus lead us to himself, to his cross, to his death and to his resurrection. May Jesus recover our eyes and make us well and use us as witnesses to preach the gospel that opens the eyes of the blind.