

The Gospel of Luke: Jesus & The Blind Man

Luke 18:31-43
January 7, 2024

the gospel according to

LUKE

Begin with Prayer

In silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you. Then pray: *Empowering God, we pray that you will send your Holy Spirit to move us to understanding; to help us to believe the gospel; to give us strength and wisdom to live by it. Amen.* (Worship Sourcebook Q.3.5.8)

Reconnecting and Debriefing

Take a moment to check in with one another (2 minutes each).

1. *How do you feel about "New Year's resolutions"? Did you make any this year?*
2. *What is one of the most common things you pray for?*

Introduction

*When we gather, our goal is to be a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus.
As you begin this week, remind your group to be respectful and non-judgmental.*

Listening to God's Word

Throughout his life, Jesus constantly defied expectations. He was raised in an obscure hometown, spent time with those society rejected, and loved sacrificially instead of exercising his authority. In this story he continues to surprise, predicting his own death and interacting with a disruptive blind man (named Bartimaeus in Mark's gospel). **This week we will interact with Jesus' humble and surprising nature, as well as the provocative questions he poses to us as his apprentices.**

Small Group Discussion

Read Luke 18:31-43. Then discuss together:

- ***What is your first thought when you read through this passage?***
- This is the third time Jesus told his disciples that he was going to be killed and resurrected. *Why do you think he told them three times?*
- In this prediction of his death, Jesus uses quite clear language about what is going to happen to him. *Why did the disciples have such a hard time understanding?*
- Members of the crowd try to silence the blind man (Bartimaeus) for causing a disruption. *Are you ever annoyed, distracted, or offended by others' response to Jesus? If so, why do you think that is?*
- **Read John 9:1-7 & Mark 8:22-26.** The gospels record many of Jesus' healings of blind people. In all of them, he interacts with the individuals differently and heals them in different ways. *Why would Jesus heal blindness in so many different ways?*
- *How do you feel about Jesus' question, "What do you want me to do for you"? Does it feel strange? Wrong? Comforting? Dangerous? Explain.*

- *If Jesus asked you the same question (“What do you want me to do for you?”), how would you respond?*
- *What is something that you deeply want Jesus to do for you that you are hesitant to ask for, or you have stopped asking for? If so, what causes you not to ask for it?*
- Bartimaeus models the path for all apprentices of Jesus: following and praising God after receiving from him. *How is God calling you to follow him in light of his work in your life?*
- ***How do you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to respond to or act on what we have read and discussed?***

Practices

Open-Hands Prayer

Although we know that we can bring anything to God in prayer, often we withhold the requests that we most deeply desire to see God’s hand upon. Whether it is fear of that request being unanswered, fatigue at having asked for it repeatedly, or some other reason, we often don’t bring to God that which we hold most dearly.

With your eyes closed, hold your hands out in front of you with your palms facing upwards. Invite the Holy Spirit to bring to mind that which you most want him to impact – a broken relationship, an addiction that won’t break, a friend that you want to follow Jesus, a health condition that requires a miracle, etc. Picture that you are holding that person/problem/idea in your open-hands and hold it up in front of God.

Like Bartimaeus, imagine Jesus looking at you and what you are holding in your hands, as he asks you, “What do you want me to do for you?” How do you respond? As you share this with God, what does he do? How does he view or interact with what you are holding? Does he say anything?

After a time of silent prayer and reflection, share your experience with the group.

Caring for One Another

- *Suggest a prayer request that is related to the topic we’ve discussed.*
- ***Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?***

Using **the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)** as a guide, based on what you’ve shared together, spend time listening to God and praying for one another.