**RABBI, I WANT TO SEE**

Mark 10:46-52 (key verse 51)

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

This message is about spiritual blindness, there is so many things happening in this world. Donald Trump was just elected president of the USA even though he was convicted. There are various wars in the world, Russia and Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, in South Africa we have the GNU. Closer to our households we may be having internal fights. However, question is, are we really seeing what is happening in the world and in our homes or families. D we have the true discernment of what is going on around us and within us. Is our eyes really open so that we have no stumbling block to full follow Jesus. In this passage when Jesus asked a blind, what do you want me to do for you? The blind man said, I want to see.

Last week we learned about true meaning of greatness through Shd Desmond message. The disciples had great desire to be great. We learned that those who are great, are those who have chosen to be servants of all. Those who have chosen to be last and not first. In today’s passage Jesus serves a man who was ignored and taken for nothing in society. Jesus gives him full attention and blesses his faith. When Jesus asked his disciples, “What do you want me to do for you?” John and James said, let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory. However, in todays’ passage Jesus ask a similar question to the blind beggar, “What do you want me to do for you?” His simple answer was Rabbi, I want to see. What is the difference between this beggar and the disciples? How come both provide different answers to Jesus question? How would you respond to Jesus question? What do we really want Jesus do for us? Our response says a lot about our spiritual condition and state before God. May the lord have mercy and grant us one clear word today. May we always have the confidence to come to Jesus, like this blind man, Rabbi, I want to see. Amen!

Look at verse 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.” Jerico was a popular resort city built by Herod the great in the Judean desert. It was not far from the Jordan river crossing. Since Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem (10:32). After crossing over from Perea, he would naturally enter Jericho. Jesus was accompanied by a large crowd and a blind man named Bartimaeus was sitting by the road side begging. His name means “son of Timaeus.” And Timaeus means “honoured” or “valued one”. It is said that he was not born blind but somehow became blind in some period in his life.

He probably heard the crowd and commotion as people were passing by, clearly someone important was passing by. Look at verse 47, “47When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” This blind man knew Jesus, he did not just know about Jesus. He called Jesus by his ancestry, he said, Jesus son of David. Jesus was not simply a miracle worker whom he now had an opportunity to also receive a miracle. This blind man called upon Jesus Son of David. He knew the identity of Jesus. It was the Jesus of the bible. In those days it was known that the messiah will come from the lineage of king David. So this man placed his faith on our lord and savior Jesus. What did he want from Jesus? He called out and said, Jesus son of David, have mercy on me! He was pleading for mercy.

In verse 48 we read that, “Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” to this blind man, this was an opportunity of a lifetime. The response of the people was to rebuke him, to suppress his voice towards Jesus. Keep quite wena. Ubani lo, shut up you are disturbing the master. Some even probably said to him, you are wasting your breadth, keep your lane and keep begging. How could the people respond this way? Should they not have actually been the ones to bring Jesus to this man so he may get healed. However, rather we see them rebuking this blind beggar. One possible reason is that, this blind man was in the lowest class of his society. He was a beggar which made him a nobody. In an industrious environment like Jericho, his blindness extremely disadvantaged him. He ended up doing the only thing he could, beggar. Its like here is Joburg, life is so busy such that even when we want to help someone, our busy schedule makes it difficult for us to help. Over time, because of a busy life we start seeing needy people as burden and we try avoid them by all means. This placed him in the lowest class of society. So how dare he disturb Jesus Christ, there were better people whom Jesus should meet. However, he did not allow anyone suppress his voice to be heard by Jesus. It did not matter what people thought about him, what mattered was for his prayer request to be heard by Jesus. His request for mercy! What mattered was Jesus reaction and not the people. And so he shouted all the more, Jesus Son of David, have mercy on me!

Look at verse 49, “Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” Jesus actually stopped to give this insignificant person attention. Looking at our last week message, Jesus was indeed a servant of all. Even this bind beggar of a nobody, Jesus had also come to serve him. Jesus stopped and said, call him. And this man did not waste time but threw his cloak aside, jumped on his feet and came to Jesus [50]. Right there we see the second of act of faith. The man did not leave his cloak nicely as something he would be returning back to. He threw his cloak aside. You know there is a story of a small community that had been praying for rain. There had a long period of a dry season in that area. No crops no vegetation and even animals loosing weight due to hunger. One day, they decided to have united prayer at an open field. They all gathered there in full energy to pray. Only one little girl brought an umbrella with her. And right there was a sure sign of faith on that little girl. She was the only one who truly believed that it was going to rain that day at the fields. So similarly, this blind man throwing his cloak aside, is indicative of what he believed. He believed he was not returning to that life. The love of God that attracted him to Jesus did not allow him to believe his life would be the same again.

He finally came to Jesus, let us all read verse 51, ***“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”*** Jesus asked this blind man the same question he asked his disciples, John and James, in Mark 10:36. However their reply was, let one of us sit on your right and the other on your left in your glory. They were after positions of power in Jesus kingdom. That is why in the previous passage the other disciples were not actually happy with John and James because the others felt that these two were trying to cheat their way into power. They were still blind to what it meant to be great, to be in a position of influence. It is not by mistake that this passage is about a blind man.

What is also interesting is that, though it is obvious what this blind man needs. Yet Jesus still asked him the question, ***what do you want me to do for you?*** This was really a personal question, directed to the blind man. A question that looked for an answer that is unique to this blind man only. It is a question that really made this blind think deeply, think about what he really wanted from Jesus. It made him to thoroughly evaluate and introspect himself, his own condition for coming to Jesus. **When Jesus asked him, what do you want me to do for you? His response is, Rabbi, I want to see.**

He referred to Jesus as Rabbi, which means teacher or master. He recognizes who Jesus is, and then provides his request. His response was, ***Rabbi, I want to see***. The blind man knew that he was blind, he knew how this disability blocked him from living out God’s purpose and plans for his life. When Jesus asked, **what would you have me do for you?** He calls on this ailment, his blindness. Rabboni, I want to see. This blind man wanted mercy from Jesus. Remember when he screamed to Jesus, his was, Jesus Son of David, have mercy on me. His request was not something he felt he deserved from Jesus, rather he was pleading for God’s mercy upon himself. However, John and James and the other disciples on the hand, where actually spiritually blind. They felt entitled to be seated at Jesus side. Perhaps because they have been with Jesus for some time. They also had done great things with Jesus. Moreover they had made big sacrifices to be with Jesus. However, they were still spiritually blind, they did not understand what it would take to be seated at Jesus right and left hand. When Jesus asked this blind man, what do you want me to for you? His request was, have mercy on me, So of David, I want to see.

Look at verse 52, “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.” Jesus first response was go your way, however after the man received his sight he followed Jesus. What does it mean that he followed Jesus? It means that now that he was saved and could see, he handed over his way of life to Jesus. He was no longer returning to his way of life. He made Jesus way his way. This is most especially significant when we actually consider where Jesus was going. Jesus was heading towards Jerusalem closer to his crucifixion. From his encounter with Jesus, he could experience God’s love to no longer live for himself but for Jesus. Though this man had become blind and blocked from doing many others things others were doing. When he gained his sight, he did not want to see in order to achieve his own goals and long list of things he could not do as a blind person. He wanted to see so that Jesus goals and way of life became his priority in life. Our response to Jesus question, is it for our own to keep living the life we desire and want or is it so that we may follow Jesus, making Jesus way of life our way of life. As the bible teaches, seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these shall be added unto you. This man did not waste any time but made a decision of faith to cling onto to Jesus.

Secondly, Jesus also said something to this man, your faith has healed you. What was the faith of this man? It was a faith that was determined to reach Jesus (he cried out all the more). He was convicted of who Jesus was. Jesus was his lord and savior and he was not going to let him pass by. It was faith that knew who Jesus was (Son of David). It was faith that came humbly to Jesus (have mercy on me). It was faith that humbly submitted to Jesus (Rabboni and later followed Jesus). It was faith that could tell Jesus what it wanted (that I may receive my sight).

In conclusion, a day is coming when Jesus will return to bring judgement on all lawlessness and those who live under the power of sin and dearth. We are in that time and generation where Jesus mercy and grace still stands as an offer for all of us. Jesus laid down his life on the cross for you and me. So that we are saved from the power of sin and death. Jesus is asking us today, what do you want me do for you? How are we responding to Jesus question? Are we coming to Jesus with the faith of this blind man or is the end of our request to fulfill our own human desires. Are we responding to Jesus’ question like this blind man. How is our request like to Jesus? How are our prayers to Jesus? Are we aware of our fundamental need before Jesus? In the end, the blind man as his name suggest, received honor from Jesus. Jesus stopped for him. He was valued by Jesus, all because he acted in faith. It is my prayer that we may come to Jesus by faith, being fully convinced that he will save us from the power of sin and death. Being fully convinced that as we follow him he will help us keep faith till the end. Amen!