

Feeling Our Need

Mark 10:46-48

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Jesus and the twelve came to Jericho, and as they left the city a great multitude followed them. There, by the side of the road, was Bartimaeus, a blind beggar. Matthew and Luke also tell of this encounter, but Matthew alone mentions two blind men naming neither one. Some might claim this is an error in God's holy book, but that simply is not so. There were two blind men sitting by the roadside as Matthew 20:30 says. Mark does not contradict Matthew's account. He only mentions one, Bartimaeus, probably because he was better known. Mark also names Bartimaeus' father, Timaeus, an indication he was a man of some prestige, explaining why his son was widely known.

Someone told the blind men that Jesus of Nazareth was coming, and immediately they began to cry out saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" What they said indicates a great deal about them.

They not only knew of Jesus of Nazareth, they knew Jesus' lineage, and in it found reason to seek mercy from the Galilean. They called Jesus "Son of David," another way of saying "the Christ" or "Messiah." Jews universally looked for a Savior, the Messiah, one who would come from King David's line and would sit upon David's throne. These blind men saw in Jesus of Nazareth the coming Messiah, the very One Jesus Himself claimed to be.

It is likely they had never met the Savior before this day. But they had heard of Him, and they were aware of His claims for divinity as well as the miraculous evidence by which His claims were proven. They believed, and their belief gave them reason to hope for mercy regarding the darkness which shrouded their eyes.

"Jesus, Son of David," they cried. "Have mercy on me!" Some in the nearby crowd tried to quiet them, but the more they were warned to be quiet, the more they cried out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Isn't it wonderful when someone's need for the Savior will not be quieted?

Often in the religious world around we meet those who claim to be Christians, yet their lives indicate the apathy of their claim. In our comfortable, twentieth century, American existence we have trouble realizing our need. These blind men did not. They were keenly aware of their need. They struggled with it daily. They couldn't see! Here was an opportunity they had never had before. They may never have it again! They would not be quieted. "Have mercy on us, Lord!" Oh, that we could feel our need as they felt theirs!