

How to Have a Powerful Faith like Bartimaeus

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Nestled in Mark's gospel is the short but powerful story of Bartimaeus. Very little is known about this man who cried out to Jesus, however, much can be learned from this glimpse into his encounter with Christ.

"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" ([Mark 10:46](#)).

Bartimaeus was a blind man and beggar who had come to believe in Jesus. In the Gospel narrative, Bartimaeus cried out, asking Jesus to have mercy on him and heal him. This account in the Bible is about [faith](#) and healing. It tells of Jesus' power and His compassion. It assures us that Jesus cares and takes notice of each one of us.

Who Was Bartimaeus?

The story of Bartimaeus is found in the tenth chapter of Mark's gospel. Jesus and his disciples had been in Jericho and were leaving the city. Earlier in the chapter, Jesus had relayed to His disciples that he came not to be served, but to serve and give His life (see [Mark 10:45](#)). That is what His ministry was all about. It is after this that Jesus was on his way out of town and Bartimaeus called for Him. Jesus demonstrated in this meeting with Bartimaeus what it truly means to serve another.

The crowds were telling Bartimaeus to quiet down and to not bother Jesus as he was leaving. He was a beggar, he was blind, and certainly, Jesus had better things to do then

spend time with Bartimaeus. When he called out, Bartimaeus declared his belief in Jesus by calling him “Son of David.” He professed his faith in Jesus and knew that Jesus could heal him.

“When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’” ([Mark 10:47](#)).

Others told him to be quiet, but Bartimaeus kept shouting and shouting out to Jesus. Bartimaeus was relentless in his pursuit of Jesus. He succeeded in getting Jesus’ attention and Jesus stopped. Jesus then asked that Bartimaeus be brought over. Perhaps the crowds got quiet with surprise or murmurs could be heard. People may have wondered what Jesus would say or do with Bartimaeus.

The crowds told Bartimaeus that Jesus was calling him over. Bartimaeus got up quickly and with much gusto, and went to Jesus. He had been heard and noticed by the Son of David – what an amazing moment! Jesus asked Bartimaeus what he wanted and Bartimaeus replied that he wanted to see.

“‘Go,’ said Jesus, ‘your faith has healed you.’ Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road” ([Mark 10:52](#)).

Jesus affirmed Bartimaeus’ faith and healed him. The blind beggar could now see. His persistence to experience the healing power of Jesus was worth it. His life had forever been changed. [Scripture](#) goes on to say that Bartimaeus continued to follow Jesus.

Why Does He Call Out to Jesus?

Bartimaeus was a blind beggar. We can only imagine the hardships, challenges, and social status issues he faced. He likely went without basic needs at times and was often ignored or ridiculed. Perhaps many condemned him, believing his blindness was a result of sinfulness or God’s punishment. Though we do not know much about him, we do know that Bartimaeus did not have an easy life. The crowds told Bartimaeus to cheer up, this may be an indication that Bartimaeus was filled with sorrow due to his blindness and poverty.

At some point, Bartimaeus must have heard about Jesus of Nazareth. He must have heard the crowds talking, people wondering if Jesus was the Messiah, and the stories of the healing power of Jesus. Bartimaeus came to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and that Jesus could heal him, if he ever got the chance to be in His presence.

“Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’” ([Mark 10:48](#)).

When he heard that Jesus was coming by, his faith rose up and spilled over and he called out to Jesus. Bartimaeus was perhaps ready for this moment, for the chance to ask Jesus to heal him. Even though the crowds told him to be quiet and not to cause any trouble, Bartimaeus called out to Jesus because he wanted to be healed and receive his sight.

Why Does Jesus Heal Bartimaeus?

A big part of Jesus' ministry was healing the blind, the lame, and even bringing the dead back to life. From the gospels, we learn that people knew Jesus was going around healing people, which is why so many came to receive healing from Him. Jesus was the one who could ease their suffering and restore what was lost.

"Throwing his cloak aside, [Bartimaeus] jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. 'What do you want me to do for you?' Jesus asked him" ([Mark 10:50-51](#)).

When Jesus approached Bartimaeus, He asked him a very important question. The answer seems obvious, but elsewhere, Jesus asked similar questions to those who approached him for help or healing. Bartimaeus knew what he wanted – to see! Jesus healed Bartimaeus because he had demonstrated his faith in Jesus. Like other healing stories in the gospels, the one healed had faith. Bartimaeus received his sight and continued to follow Jesus. The hope is that he not only followed Jesus that day, but for the rest of his life.

What Can We Learn from Bartimaeus about Our Own Faith?

Faith in Jesus is truly an amazing gift! To believe in, to trust, and to know our Lord and Savior is blessing upon blessing. Bartimaeus experienced firsthand the fruit of having faith in Jesus. Having faith allows Jesus to work in our hearts and lives in powerful ways. If Bartimaeus did not have faith, he would not have been healed. Through faith, God works in us and through us.

Having faith prompts us to pursue Jesus. It was Bartimaeus' faith that empowered him to pursue Jesus relentlessly, even when others were telling him to stop. His faith could not be silenced. When it comes to our own faith, we can be careful not to let others discourage us, distract us, or pull us away from Jesus. Our faith is what moves us closer to Jesus and into a personal relationship with Him. Having faith is pleasing to God.

Faith helps each of us continue following Jesus. Bartimaeus went on to follow Jesus after he was healed. Like Bartimaeus, when we put our faith in Jesus and pursue Him, we are invited to follow Him. Jesus often invited those he encountered to follow Him. The same invitation is open to us today. Faith helps us choose daily to follow Jesus and not be led astray.

Seek Him Relentlessly

The narrative of Bartimaeus receiving his sight is an incredible story of Jesus' healing power and what faith can do! Not only do we learn about Jesus' compassion and power, but the faith Bartimaeus had inspires us in our own faith journey to seek Jesus relentlessly and follow Him each day. When we have faith, Jesus responds. He is our healer, provider, and hears every need.

It can be hard to have faith when things are tough, but even this blind beggar was able to muster up enough faith in Jesus to be healed. When we are going through our most difficult circumstances, we can shout out to Jesus and know He will hear us, just like he heard Bartimaeus among the crowd.