

THE REALLY GOOD LIFE

(The Life of Christ Series)

Gospel of Luke

20/20 Vision

If you have 20/20 vision it means that both of your eyes are seeing everything clearly and sending accurate visual data to your brain for processing. If your vision is declared less than 20/20, corrective lenses or laser surgery can be performed for clearer vision. Modern medicine and advanced optometric measures can produce marvelous results for anyone who is willing and able to pay for it. Often, even legally blind people can find some degree of visual enhancement today. Total blindness, however, is a malady without remedy requiring the corrective power of God for miraculous restoration of sight.

During His first coming, the Lord Jesus specialized in healing two kinds of blindness – physical and spiritual. One of the main proofs that Jesus was the Messiah (Christ) of God was that He healed the blind (**Luke 7:22, etc.**). Of the maladies Jesus corrected, restoration of sight to the blind was perhaps the most amazing and creative – sometimes He simply spoke and blindness was healed; other times He touched the eyes of the blind and sight was restored; once He had a blind man put mud on the eyes for healing; He even anointed one blind man's eyes with *spit* to cause healing! Once Jesus healed a man in stages: first the man could see, but things were blurry then Jesus touched Him again and everything was clear! It's almost as though the Lord enjoyed seeing how many different ways He could use restore 20/20 vision to blind eyes. He demonstrated that application of God's awesome grace to people's lives was not a drab, routine, formula – but that it is always very personal and miraculous when His grace touched a person's eyes and life.

Healing blindness was/is particularly useful on a spiritual level as well. The inability for people's minds and hearts to perceive the seriousness of their sin problem, Who Jesus really is, and what He came to do is the most serious kind of sight impairment – soul blindness or heart blindness. The Bible informs us that all people are born in absolute spiritual darkness (**Romans 3:10-18**). This plague of spiritual blindness is both natural and supernatural – natural because we are all born physically alive but spiritually dead and incapable of seeing our need of Jesus as Savior (**Ephesians 2:1-3**); we are also becoming even more spiritually blind the longer we go without Christ coming into our heart and life (**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**). Then over time spiritual darkness becomes the preference of those who continually turn away from righteousness and the Lord (**John 3:18-21**). This darkness pervades the will and emotions (**Matthew 6:23**) and lifestyle of non-Christians (**Ephesians 4:18-19**) until they finally end up in the place of eternal darkness called hell (**Matthew 8:12, 2 Peter 2:17, Jude 13**).

Since every person is born spiritually blind all need someone whose spiritually sight has been restored to lead them to Jesus for healing of their spiritual vision. No one who comes to Jesus wanting to come out of the dark about spiritual things ever leaves disappointed (**Ephesians 5:8, Colossians 1:13, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 2:8**). Those whose physical sight was healed when Jesus walked the earth first heard His voice, then felt His touch and finally opened their eyes to see Him smiling back at them. This is what happens to the eyes of faith when anyone comes to salvation – you hear His voice as the Word of God is spoken or read; you feel His touch upon your heart and mind to believe and pray; then you see clearly that Jesus died for you, rose again and has come into your life by faith. **At communion** we pause and remember the restorative medication that healed our blind souls when we first saw the light and trusted Jesus as our Savior – His broken body (the bread) and His blood (the cup) represent both the great Physician Himself and the healing treatment that took away our blindness and gave us 20/20 vision to see, know, and follow Him until the day we see Him Face to face (**1 John 3:2-3**). Like the hymn proclaims: *“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound ... I once was lost but now am found; was blind but now, I see!”*

The Blind Spot

(Jesus' healing of the blind men near Jericho)

Luke 18:35-43

Introduction: The parallel gospel accounts about the last public healing by Jesus are found in **Matthew 20:29-34** and **Mark 10:46-52**. *Matthew and Mark* concur that the miracle was done as Jesus was leaving Jericho, while Luke says it happened as Jesus was coming toward Jericho. Since there were two Jericho locations: 1) the ancient ruins of the town that was destroyed and cursed/ **Joshua 6:26-27** and 2) a new town located a short distance away from the Jericho ruins of **Joshua 6**. In reconciling all the accounts then it is obvious that the miracle happened between these two locations with Matthew and Mark focusing on the old city and Luke focused on the inhabited Jericho. A second difference in accounts is that Matthew says two unnamed blind men were healed while Mark and Luke only mention one man named Bartimaeus. Clearly two blind men were healed in Matthew's account. To reconcile the accounts, then it must be true that one of the blind men is Bartimaeus

while the other is unnamed. Seemingly, the healed man who is unnamed followed Jesus and the 12 briefly and then went his own way (*Mark 10:52*), while Bartimaeus chose to continue following Jesus on into Jericho (the newer town) making him the primary character of the story.

Note: Jesus leaving the Jericho ruins and proceeding toward Jerusalem pictures Christ leaving the Old Testament era with its obsolete religious system and moving into the New Testament era of grace through faith in Him. Also, there is a clear contrast between Bartimaeus (a poor beggar changed by Jesus) and Zacchaeus (a rich man also changed by Christ). Down and outers as well as up and outers need to meet and know Jesus – He is an equal opportunity Savior of both kinds of people and all in between. His ‘business trip’ to Jerusalem was for all who call upon Him (*Romans 10:9-13*).

The Right Place at the Right Time!

(The seeker’s responsibility)

“Then it happened, as He (Jesus) was coming near Jericho, that **a certain blind man sat by the road begging**. And hearing a multitude passing by, **he asked what it meant**. So they told him that **Jesus of Nazareth** was passing by. And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but **he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”** **18:35-39**

- It is important for those wanting to truly know the Lord to get in position to meet Him. Are you regularly inviting people and bringing people to church so they can meet Jesus?
- Are you praying that people without Jesus in their life will wonder about and want Him? Are you memorizing scripture and equipping yourself to answer questions about Christ?
- If someone asked you how to begin a personal relationship with God through faith in the Lord Jesus, would you know some verses about how to do that? Such as.....?

The Right PERSON in the Right Way!

(The Savior’s responsibility)

“So **Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him**. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, “**What do you want Me to do for you?**” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; **your faith** has made you well.” **18:40-42**

- The Lord Jesus knows what we need, but insists on us asking Him for it. Why? Have you? (*Romans 10:13*)
- Now that Jesus died upon the cross and rose from the grave, what must you do to be saved and sure of heaven? When did God open the eyes of your heart to see your need of salvation in Christ?
- Keep the gospel message simple: we’ve sinned; Jesus died in our place and arose; you must turn away from sin (repent); ask Him to forgive you and enter your heart and life. Is it really that easy? Explain.
- Discuss how religion blurs the gospel message and how God must correct the spiritual vision of religious people. Talk about how God corrects the spiritual vision of religious people.

The Right Response to HIS Righteous Gift

(The saved soul response)

And immediately he received his sight and **followed Him, glorifying God**. And all the people, when they saw it, gave **praise to God**.” **18:43**

- If you have truly received Jesus you see everything differently now through His eyes. (Jesus is real; the Bible is God’s Word; prayer is talking with your Father in heaven; church is a wonderful place to learn more, praise God and make new, better friends)
- Life is about seeing Jesus, hearing His voice more clearly and following Him closer every day. Other people who see the changes in you will want Jesus also and praise God, too. Discuss *1 Peter 3:15*.
- Discuss how this miracle illustrates the disciples’ impaired ability for insights about Jesus (v. 34).
- What is the lesson for us from Bartimaeus when our spiritual vision is blurred?