

# St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups. October 1<sup>st</sup> 2006

## Keys of the Kingdom – Healing & wholeness Mark 10 46-52

### Word – Key points from Sunday's sermon

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**"What do you want me to do for you?" It may seem painfully obvious and even odd to ask a blind man what he wants, but this question from Jesus makes perfect sense in the context of this 10th chapter in Mark's Gospel, where what other people wanted Jesus to do provides a vivid contrast.**

Bartimaeus hears that Jesus is passing by. Bartimaeus has faith that Jesus can help him. He begins to shout: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Bartimaeus asks, not for cash but for cure, his request is deeper than simply asking for a quick fix – he wants mercy and he knows that Jesus is able to deliver it to him. The crowd rebukes Bartimaeus telling him to "be quiet." but he demands an audience with Jesus. Jesus stops and says, "Call him." Bartimaeus throws his cloak aside, throwing off his wealth and possessions jumps to his feet and comes to Jesus.

Jesus now asks the specific question: "What do you want me to do for you?" While the answer is obvious, Jesus wants the man to speak out clearly and directly what he wants. No general petitions. The man responds with simplicity, "Rabbi, I want to see." This is it. He wants his sight. He wants the goodness of God's creation restored for him. Jesus now heals Bartimaeus telling him to "Go your faith has healed you." He follows after Jesus along the road. He not only gets a miracle, he gets a Master. He now becomes a "Christ-follower."

#### **The Effect of the Kingdom: Journeying towards wholeness...**

When the Kingdom comes in fullness the effects of the Fall - sin and suffering, disease and death are reversed. Holiness replaces sin. Well-being replaces suffering. Wholeness replaces disease. Life replaces death. So, for the Kingdom to be "at hand," or "within reach" we must see the goodness of God's creation being restored. God wants you and I to be wholly restored. To be brought back into view as we were before the fall of Creation. Think of the creation story. Wholeness is certainly a word we can connect to healing. We seek to be made physically whole, spiritually whole. There was another healing that can help us in our journey towards wholeness. It is the story of the friends who brought their lame friend to Jesus. If you have time read this together. For inner healing and wholeness to take place we must forgive and be forgiven. A significant barrier to inner healing and wholeness is fundamentally around the necessity to forgive and to be forgiven. Forgiveness is never easy but it is easier through the power of the cross.

Our behaviour too can be affected by damage from the past. We may have made wrong choices. Our past experiences may have developed an irrational belief system in our minds, affecting most if not all of our current relationships – none of which was God's intention. We may have grown up surrounded by adults using words like "ought and should". Our past hurt, past experience and past teaching has resulted in emotional damage, irrational beliefs, sin and wrong choices. The present consequences of these past experiences can understandably produce all sorts of feelings – guilt, anger, confusion, insecurity, self doubt, fear...the list goes on. If its true that God wants to bring us inner healing and wholeness then it's true that he wants us to have these past experiences reconciled. That is not to say that we shouldn't acknowledge these feelings. Indeed we need to acknowledge them and to recognise where they came from. Then, just as Bartimaeus was specific in answering Jesus question with "I want to see", we too need to be specific. The presence of Jesus is where we can have our needs met, where the Kingdom is close at hand and where we can find both inner and outer healing, forgiveness and wholeness. Jesus has ransomed us from our futile ways inherited by our forefathers. On the cross Jesus died as a ransom for our sins. Blind Bartimaeus knew about Jesus. We know about Jesus. We can ask Jesus what we want Him to do; we can ask for faith that he will do it and trust that if he doesn't it, there may be reason beyond our understanding. A blind man is more important to Jesus than the crowd appeal and we can be sure that Jesus cares wholly for every one of us.



#### **Witness: Questions to discuss**

1. Healing does not always come when we ask – discuss why you think this is?
2. How easy do you find it to ask for specific personal things in prayer?
3. God wants us to become whole people. In the rush of life how can we find time to reflect on our inner selves and time to wait in the presence of God?
4. To forgive and be forgiven...if you feel able discuss how un-forgiveness can affect our journey to wholeness and healing?
5. Spend some time being in God's presence, inviting Him to show you your innermost needs. If you don't feel it is appropriate to share these with the group, hold them before God and try to give them to him at the foot of the cross. Then begin to receive His healing