

*Memory Verse*

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” (Ephesians 1:18)

| Knowledge of God’s Will<br>[God’s Word]                                | Knowledge of God<br>[God’s Divine Nature]  | Good Work<br>[Behavior]   |
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| God has the power to open blind eyes, both physically and spiritually. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God is our healer.</li> <li>2. God is all-powerful.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Go to Jesus to receive healing for spiritual blindness.</li> <li>2. Be filled with the Holy Spirit and ask God to open our inner eyesight.</li> </ol> |

*Overview*

**Events and Spiritual Teachings**

- A. God Is Our Healer
- B. Jesus Heals the Blind Man at Bethsaida (Mk 8:22–26)
  1. The Uniqueness of This Miracle
  2. **Life Application**
    - a. Recognizing Spiritual Blindness and Its Cure
    - b. Growing Out of Spiritual Blindness
- C. Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46–52)
  1. The Uniqueness of This Miracle
  2. **Life Application**
    - a. Seize the Opportunity to Know God
    - b. Earnestly and Persistently Come to Jesus in Faith

**Memory Verse**

**Conclusion:** Seize the opportunity to cry out to the Lord and do not let Him pass us by, for we may not have another chance.

## Spiritual Teachings

### A. God Is Our Healer

Today, we will study several events recorded in the gospels where Jesus healed the sick. Matthew 9:35 tells us, “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” These included those who suffered from illnesses, chronic diseases, disabilities, and even incurable conditions such as the lame and the blind (Mt 15:30–31). Throughout His ministry, none who came to Him for healing were denied.

But when we look at the healing that Jesus performed, we must understand that His focus was not on physical healing. All forms of physical suffering and illness came as a consequence of Adam and Eve’s sin. Yet God, who is full of divine compassion and mercy, sent Jesus to give His life by dying on the cross for us, so that “by His stripes we are healed” (Isa 53:5). Jesus came not to provide physical healing, but to provide redemption, and “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk 19:10). That is the ultimate purpose of His healing—to redeem sinners.

In fact, the entire gospel is summed up in Luke 4:18–19:

*“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the **poor**; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the **captives** and recovery of sight to the **blind**, to set at liberty those who are **oppressed**; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

In these verses, Jesus proclaimed His purpose clearly. But who are the poor, the captive, the blind, and those who are oppressed?

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Poor</b>      | “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3).   |
| <b>Captives</b>  | “Those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb 2:15).  |
| <b>Blind</b>     | Those who turn “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18). |
| <b>Oppressed</b> | Those who are under the oppression of sin and Satan.  |

Every healing miracle is a clear display of Jesus’ compassion, grace, and mercy. They are proof of His divine authority, and of a never-changing God whose heart is full of love for those who suffer. We know that God is the one “who heals all your diseases” (Ps 103:3), as well as the one who “heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds” (Ps 147:3). So, when we desire healing, we must ask for it in faith from God, our healer. And from Luke 4:18–19, we can see that the healing Jesus offers is more than a release from pain and sorrow. He offers us liberation from bondage and sin.

### B. Jesus Heals the Blind Man at Bethsaida

Let us study the passage recorded in Mark 8:22–26.

*Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.”*

## The Context

In the beginning of this chapter, Jesus fed around 4,000 (Mk 8:1–9). Immediately after, Jesus boarded a boat with His disciples and warned them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (Mk 8:15). The leaven refers to the false teachings of the Pharisees. Misunderstanding Jesus, the disciples thought He was talking about physical bread. Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?” (Mk 8:18). When He reached Bethsaida, He healed the blind man. When we study this miracle in context, we too can have eyes that see clearly.

### 1. The Uniqueness of This Miracle

Jesus healed many blind people during His three-year ministry. Four of these instances are recorded in the gospels, but only the Gospel of Mark records Jesus healing the blind man from Bethsaida. This miracle is unique in several ways.

- It is the only recorded event where Jesus spit on a person.
- It is the only recorded event where Jesus healed a person in stages:
  - *Jesus’ initial healing*  
Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town, away from the crowds. Then, Jesus spit on his eyes and put His hands on him. Jesus asked the man if he saw anything. The man looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.”
  - *Jesus’ perfect healing*  
Jesus put His hands on the man’s eyes again and made him look up. Then, his sight was restored.

Let’s ask ourselves some questions.

#### a. Why did Jesus lead the man outside of the town before He healed him?

Though the Bible does not record the reason behind Jesus’ decision to do this, it does record Bethsaida as a place of unbelief (Mt 11:21; Lk 10:13). Thus, Jesus may have chosen to lead the man outside of the town as judgment on the town for its unbelief. Jesus knew the heart of the people who had refused to accept His teachings.

#### b. Why was the healing of this blind man unusual?

The healing of this blind man is unusual because it occurred in two stages rather than instantaneously. After the first stage, he could see images, but only blurry ones. Only after the second stage, when Jesus put His hands on him a second time, did his vision become fully restored.

#### c. What is the significance of the different stages?

This unusual method of healing teaches us that there is a purpose behind every action that Jesus does. He is not limited to one way of healing, but heals according to how He sees fit, and never leaves His work unfinished. When God heals, He heals to the utmost. The different stages of healing in this miracle also mirror the different stages in our faith. Ephesians 1:15–16, 18 says:

*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: [that] the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.*

Spiritual maturation and enlightenment are part of a continuous process that begins from the moment one believes. After the first stage of healing, Jesus asked the blind man if he could see anything (Mk 8:23). The man looked up and replied, “I see men like trees, walking” (Mk 8:24). He

could not yet discern the nature of these objects. When Jesus put His hands on the man's eyes again and made him look up, he saw everything clearly.

**d. Why did Jesus instruct the man: "Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town"?**

The Bible describes Bethsaida as a place where mighty works to repentance had been done, yet they did not repent. So, Jesus Christ said, "Woe to you, Bethsaida!" (Mt 11:21). Similarly, if we choose to reject spiritual blessings, and to reject God, then God will not interfere with our strong will. We will simply suffer the loss of our spiritual blessings and privileges. Ultimately, we must be responsible for the choices we make.

**2. Life Application**

**a. Recognizing Spiritual Blindness and Its Cure**

We can equate the man's physical blindness to our own spiritual blindness. We all have blind spots: areas of life where we cannot see the complete picture. When we lack the fullness of the Holy Spirit, our spiritual perception is clouded. Our spiritual blindness prevents us from seeing God clearly. But as we draw closer to Him and let our faith grow in obedience, our spiritual sight grows with it. It is an ongoing process, but as long as we rely on Him, Jesus will increase the clarity of our spiritual eyes so that we can see the hope of His calling and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (Eph 1:18). What are some areas of your spiritual life that are blurry?

It is not only our own spiritual blindness that we need to recognize, but that of others as well. In the passage we studied, the blind man had been brought to Jesus by others, who begged Jesus to touch him. Only when we ourselves are clear sighted can we see another's blindness (Mt 7:3–5), but when we do, we should intercede for them.

**b. Growing Out of Spiritual Blindness**

Jesus said, "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt 6:22–23). We need to be aware and constantly check the condition of our eyesight. It is not enough for us simply to be able to see; we need to see clearly with understanding. We need to see with discernment and insight.

In today's fast-paced environment, we desire quick fixes and quick answers, but God does not work like that. Spiritual growth is not instantaneous. We must go through all stages of life: learning and growing, falling down and getting back up. After the first step in His healing, Jesus asked the man, "Do you see anything?" Now is the time to ask yourself: Which areas do I need to grow in the most? (Allow students to discuss. Examples may be: Bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit; bearing the image of Christ; learning how to defeat the giants in my life; learning to draw closer to God; etc.)

**C. Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus**

Let us now study the miracle recorded in Mark 10:46–52:

*Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you." And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. So Jesus answered and said*

to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

## 1. The Uniqueness of This Miracle

- This is one of the few miracles where the recipient's name is mentioned. Bartimaeus' name means "honorable" in Greek. In Hebrew, it means, "the son of spiritual blindness."
- Although Bartimaeus had never met or seen Jesus before, he believed in Him; as a result, he received not only physical sight, but also spiritual sight.

Let's examine this miracle by asking some questions.

### a. What condition was Bartimaeus in before he was healed?

Bartimaeus was blind and poor. Yet, it is clear from the passage that he had heard about Jesus, His miracles, and His teachings before. This is how he came to believe that Jesus could heal him. So, when he heard that Jesus was passing by, he began to cry out. Desperate for healing, Bartimaeus persisted in fighting to gain Jesus' attention, even when the surrounding people told him to stop crying out. His determination is proof of his faith.

### b. How did the crowd respond when they heard Bartimaeus cry out, "Son of David, have mercy on me"? How did Jesus respond to Bartimaeus' cries?

They warned him to be quiet at first, but then told him to "be of good cheer" after Jesus Christ acknowledged his cries. Jesus stood still and commanded the crowd to call Bartimaeus to Him. Bartimaeus' cries were enough to cause Jesus, God Himself, to stop in His tracks. Jesus' followers had no time for Bartimaeus, and the crowd kept urging him to keep quiet, but Jesus stopped what He was doing and stood still to heal him. This is the heart of our Father; every time we cry out to Him, He is here and will stand still for us.

### c. What did Bartimaeus do when Jesus called him?

He threw his garment aside, arose, and came to Jesus.

### d. Why is it important for Jesus to ask Bartimaeus, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

The Bible records many instances where Jesus asks this question before He heals a person. In a way, Jesus was testing Bartimaeus to see if he really believed that He could heal him.

### e. Why did Bartimaeus shout, "Son of David"? What does this title mean?

The Son of David is the promised Messiah, the one who was to come from the lineage of King David (Jn 7:42; Mt 21:9). In Matthew, "Son of David" appears frequently, emphasizing Jesus' identity as King. In the Gospel of Mark, Bartimaeus is the only person recorded who called Jesus "Son of David." He knew that Jesus was more than just "Jesus of Nazareth." His faith compelled him to plead for Jesus' mercy (*BSG: Mark, 7.3: 10*).<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Life Application

### a. Seize the Opportunity to Know God

We are poor and blind like Bartimaeus, so we must seize the opportunity to cry out to the Lord to heal our blindness. Bartimaeus appealed to Jesus knowing that He was unlike other religious leaders; he believed that Jesus was someone who cared for the poor and the brokenhearted. Despite his blindness, he "saw" what others could not: that Jesus was the Messiah. We, too, cannot let Him pass us by, for we may not have another chance. We should seize the precious opportunity

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<sup>1</sup> TJC Department of Literary Ministry, *Bible Study Guide: Mark*, (Malaysia: True Jesus Church, 2012), [http://bsg.tjc.org/tjc\\_bsg\\_lesson/mark-17/](http://bsg.tjc.org/tjc_bsg_lesson/mark-17/), 7.3: 10.

to know God so that we can have eternal life and teach others, believers and non-believers alike, to grab hold of the chance as well.

- How do you see Jesus? Is He just a moral teacher? A historic figure? What do you see?
- Do we understand the divine nature of God? Name one nature of God that you've experienced this past week.
- Do you grasp the opportunity to know God? Have you ever let such an opportunity slip past you?

**b. Earnestly and Persistently Come to Jesus in Faith**

How we ask for something says a lot about how much we desire the object of our plea. Bartimaeus knew that this was probably his only chance of being healed, so he persisted in his cries until Jesus answered his plea. As long as we yearn for God's help, we should not let anyone or anything discourage us while we seek the Lord's mercy, but instead keep crying out to Him until He answers us. We can be confident and persistent in praying to God, as long as we are asking according to God's will.

Bartimaeus cried out to the Son of David with these words: "Have mercy on me!" Bartimaeus saw himself as a sinner. Jesus said him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He replied, "Rabbi, I want to see." Bartimaeus had only one desire, one that he expressed sincerely and honestly without any false humility. His faith was so great that he trusted that Jesus was able to fulfill his request. And his actions reflected his great faith. So, Jesus said to Bartimaeus, "Go your way, your faith has made you well." Bartimaeus immediately received his sight and followed Jesus. Jesus showed us with His words that Bartimaeus had the kind of faith that pleases God. Likewise, God "is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Heb 11:6).

- Despite his blindness, Bartimaeus had the spiritual eyes to see Jesus' true identity. Is it better to be blind and see the true and living God, or to have two eyes and see nothing?
- How would you reply if Jesus asked you, "What do you want Me to do for you"?
- Bartimaeus showed his faith in action. Are you determined to meet Jesus and follow Jesus, just as Bartimaeus did? How have you shown or not shown your determination to come to Him and put your trust in Him?

*Check for Understanding*

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- 1. What was Jesus' true purpose behind His healing?** Jesus came not to provide physical healing, but to provide redemption, and "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk 19:10). That is the ultimate purpose of His healing—to redeem sinners.
- 2. Why was the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida unusual?** The healing of this blind man is unusual because it occurs in two stages rather than instantaneously. After the first stage, he could see images, but only blurry ones. Only after the second stage, when Jesus put His hands on him a second time, did his vision become fully restored.
- 3. What is spiritual blindness?** When we lack the fullness of the Holy Spirit, our spiritual perception is clouded. Our spiritual blindness prevents us from seeing God clearly.
- 4. What can we learn from Bartimaeus' persistent appeals?** We, too, cannot let Jesus pass us by, for we may not have another chance. We should seize the precious opportunity to know God so that we can have eternal life and teach others, believers and non-believers alike, to grab hold of the chance as well.

### *Memory Verse*

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“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” (Ephesians 1:18)

### **Meaning**

This is part of apostle Paul’s remarkable prayer recorded in Ephesians, chapter 1. He asked God to grant the Ephesians a greater measure of the Spirit’s presence and power, particularly in the eyes. He wanted them to understand “what is the hope of His calling.” Before being called by God, we have “no hope” and are “without God” (Eph 2:12). We now know what the “calling” of God is—to be saved and to be cleansed by His blood (Eph 2:13). We now have the riches of the glory of His inheritance.

Sometimes, we are so busy looking at what lies in front of us that we cannot see anything else. We need to ask God to enlighten our eyes so that our sensitivities are not dulled by our circumstances or surroundings. Let us continuously move forward in faith so that we are able to see our inheritance and thus fix our gaze on our hope for eternity.

### *Conclusion*

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Jesus said, “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Mt 6:22–23). We need to be aware and constantly check the condition of our eyesight. When Jesus asked the blind man, “Do you see anything?” The man replied, “I see men as trees, walking.” So, Jesus touched his eyes again, and it was only then that he saw clearly. It is not enough for us simply to be able to see; we need to see clearly with understanding. We need to see with discernment and insight.

In the second passage, Jesus stood still and commanded the crowd to call Bartimaeus to Him. Bartimaeus’ cries were enough to cause Jesus, God Himself, to stop in His tracks. Jesus’ followers had no time for Bartimaeus, and the crowd kept urging him to keep quiet, but Jesus stopped what He was doing and stood still to heal him. This is the heart of our Father; every time we cry out to Him, He is here and will stand still for us.

## Lesson 7 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. Why is it so important that our eyes be enlightened? What is it that we have to be able to see?  
*We need to understand “what is the hope of His calling” – to be saved and cleansed by His blood. Sometimes, we are so busy looking at what lies in front of us that we do not fix our gaze on our hope for eternity, our inheritance.*
2. What was Jesus’ focus and purpose on earth?  
*To give His life by dying on the cross for us, so that we might be healed. To provide redemption and to seek and to save that which was lost. The ultimate purpose of His healing was to redeem sinners and offer us liberation from bondage and sin.*
3. What made Jesus’ healing of the blind man at Bethsaida a unique event?  
*It is the only recorded event where Jesus spit on a person and where He healed someone in stages. It is also unique in that Jesus specifically led the man away from the town and crowds to heal him.*
4. What happens when we are spiritually blind? How can we better our spiritual eyesight?  
*We cannot see God clearly. When we draw closer to God and let our faith grow in obedience, our sight also grows. It is an ongoing process, but as long as we rely on Him, Jesus will increase the clarity of our spiritual eyes.*
5. What two key characteristics can we learn from Bartimaeus?  
*Despite having never met or seen Jesus before, he fully believed that Jesus could heal him. Secondly, despite the people who told him to be quiet, Bartimaeus persisted in his cries to gain Jesus’ attention and continued to call out to Him until He responded.*
6. What do you think is the condition of your eyesight? Are your eyes fixed on God and His kingdom? What can you personally change or do in your life to improve your spiritual eyesight?  
*Personal answers. Try to remind the students to think of “actionable” items, something that can be actively checked off in their daily or weekly life (e.g., spend five extra minutes in prayer, memorize an extra verse each week, etc.).*