

What Do You Want?

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[0 : 00] Good morning. My name is Matthew Capone and I'm the pastor here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church and it's my joy to bring God's word to you today.

Special welcome if you're new or visiting with us. We're glad that you're here and we're glad that you're here not because we're trying to fill seats, but because we're following Jesus together as one community.

And as we follow Jesus together, we become convinced that there's no one so good. They don't need God's grace and no one so bad. They can't have it, which is why we come back week after week to hear what God has to say to us in his word.

We're continuing our series in the Gospel of Mark and you'll remember that the Gospels tell the story of Jesus in his life and his death and his resurrection. And as we were going through the beginning, chapters 1 through 8, we asked this question, who is Jesus?

We saw in the middle of chapter 8, Peter answers it definitively for us, that Jesus is the Christ. He's the one who's come to be the ultimate prophet, priest, and king for God's people.

[1 : 08] And so now we've been on a journey with a slightly different question heading out from that, which is what does it look like to follow after Jesus? And over the last few weeks, we have seen, as Jesus literally heads to Jerusalem, that the kingdom operates in a way that is upside down.

It operates in a way that is different from the world. We've seen that when it came to marriage and sex. We've seen that when it comes to children, when it comes to money, and then last week when it comes to power and glory and success and fame.

Now this week, it might appear on the surface that we've turned away from that, that we're simply looking at another healing story. In fact, this is the last healing that Jesus will perform before Holy Week begins in chapter 11.

But it is actually not just another blind man who's given sight. Jesus is using this, Mark is using this, as a conclusion to the upside down nature of the kingdom.

In fact, it in some ways connects all the stories that come before what we've seen over the last month or so, as Jesus gets right at the issue of desire.

[2 : 22] Because all the things that we've looked at, marriage, children, money, power, get at what it is that our hearts most long for. What we dream of, what we want, the results that we look for.

And so it's with that I invite you to turn with me to God's word. We're in Mark chapter 10, starting at verse 46. You can turn in your worship guide, you can turn on your phone, you can turn in your Bible.

No matter where you turn, remember that this is God's word. In Proverbs chapter 30, verse 5 tells us that every word of God proves true. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

And so that's why we read now, starting at verse 46. And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside.

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. Verse 48. And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent.

[3 : 38] But he cried out all the more, son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stopped and said, call him. And they called the blind man, saying to him, take heart, get up.

He is calling you. Verse 50. And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, what do you want me to do for you?

And the blind man said to him, Rabbi, let me recover my sight. And Jesus said to him, go your way. Your faith has made you well.

And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way. I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word.

Our Father in heaven, we come again to your word. And we thank you that you promise that it won't return to you empty. But it will accomplish all of your purposes.

[4 : 39] And so we ask that you would honor that promise this morning, that you would use it to accomplish your purposes in our hearts, in our minds, in our lives. That you would do for us what we can't do for ourselves.

That you'd change hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. That you'd show us our need for you and your salvation. And you'd also show us your grace.

Most of all, we ask that you would show us Jesus, that we would see exactly how beautiful he is. And we ask these things in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

When I was in seminary, the seminary that I went to also offered a counseling program. And there were a variety of men that I came in with who came in thinking that they were going to be pastors. And they left instead being counselors. Some of my best friends, in fact. And there was an exercise that some of those counselors had to do in their very last year of the program together when they were doing their internship.

[5 : 44] Meaning they were practicing with actual clients in real life situations. And then they would meet together to be coached and mentored and to discuss these things. And some of them in their coaching groups were required to do an exercise that they referred to as goaling.

Goaling, going along with the word goal. Something that you want or desire. And that was, in fact, the purpose of the exercise. It was for them to answer this question. What is it that you really want? What is it deep down that your heart longs for that maybe you've not been willing to say out loud before, but now you need to say something you've not been willing to admit to anyone?

And it turned out to be a much harder exercise than it sounds like on the surface because it involves grappling with what it is we want most of all.

The person who presents a public image of having this carefree existence that they love, full of trips and experiences, has to wrestle with whether they actually are deeply lonely and want to find someone to settle down with.

[6 : 57] The person who presents as a family man has to ask himself if deep down he wants professional success more than anything else. Maybe someone works for a company nine to five and what they're afraid to say out loud is that they wish that they could work for themselves.

Maybe it's something as simple as being comfortable financially. Maybe you just want to have friends who you can trust, who enjoy you, and whom you enjoy.

Desire is a funny thing, and often we haven't slowed down enough to know what it is we actually want. We can be caught off guard by them when they appear.

Now, when these counselors were given this exercise, the story that I heard they were told at the very beginning, a sobering one was of a man who did the goaling, and he decided at the end of it that what he wanted more than anything else, his desire, what he was going to head for, was he had a number in his head of his annual salary.

This man wanted to make \$500,000 a year. And at the end of the year, after he had completed his goaling exercise, he had accomplished what he set out to do.

[8 : 13] He was making \$500,000 a year, except that there was a catch. In that year, he had also lost his family.

Desire is a dangerous thing. The heart is a risky thing. And as they say, we have to be careful what we wish for because we might have the misfortune of actually getting it.

I told you on the surface, this might look like just another healing story for Jesus, but actually it's deeply connected to our passage from last week. It's so connected, in fact, that I almost preached last week's passage and this week's passage as one sermon rather than two, and it's because there's this phrase that appears in both stories.

There's this connection that ties them intimately together. It's Jesus' question that he asked last week in verse 36. Remember, James and John come to him and they say, we want you to give us whatever it is that we ask for.

And Jesus responds by saying this, what do you want me to do for you? It's not a coincidence that that same exact question appears in this passage.

[9 : 35] This blind man is crying out to Jesus. Those around him are trying to silence him. Jesus calls him to come. And what is it that Jesus says to him? The exact same words. What do you want me to do for you?

Mark has placed these two stories together because he wants us to put them side by side. He wants us to see this same question asked of two different people and for us to realize how radically different the answers are.

One answers that they want power, honor, and glory. The other one answers that he just wants to be able to see.

Verse 51, Rabbi, let me recover my sight. I've told you before that repetition in the Bible matters. And this repetition here is not just meant to tie these two stories together. It is to turn the barrel of the story straight at us, the readers, because the question that Jesus asks of James and John, the question that he asks of this blind man, is the same question Mark means for his readers to answer.

[10 : 51] What is it that you want Jesus to do for you? When we come into this story, verse 46, they're crossing the Jordan River, which means that they're heading from the west towards the east.

This is to remind us that Jesus is getting closer and closer to Jerusalem. And so as he's nearing the cross, things are coming into greater and greater focus.

Next week, chapter 11 is going to start out with his triumphal entry into Jerusalem when he rides a donkey as a conquering king. I've told you before that as the gospel of Mark continues, we're going to see three groups of people merge into two.

It's been pointed out that as we begin in the gospel, there are folks who love Jesus, folks who are opposed to Jesus, and folks who are ambivalent to Jesus. As we continue in the gospel, that middle category disappears, and we only have two.

Either we love Jesus and want to follow him, or we're opposed to him and reject him. It's in that that we see this man, verse 47, he's crying out.

[12 : 00] Maybe he's ashamed, maybe he's embarrassed, but he is too desperate to care. He does something else that's interesting.

In verse 47, he hears that it's Jesus of Nazareth, but he doesn't cry that out. What does he say instead? Did you notice it? He says, Jesus, son of David.

That son of David is language that refers to Jesus as the king, because remember that David was the quintessential king of Israel, and it was from David's line that the greater king was meant to come.

And so this blind man, at least at some level, understands Jesus' identity. He knows something about the fact that Jesus is the king. But unlike the disciples, unlike James and John, he also understands something about himself.

Verses 47 and 48, we hear twice, have mercy on me. Verse 48, they try to silence him, but it doesn't matter because his need is too great.

[13 : 16] Brothers and sisters, the point is this. Jesus is not going to be beautiful to us unless we know, until we know, that we need his mercy.

Jesus is not going to be beautiful to us. Until we know, unless we know, how much we need him. If Jesus is boring and unattractive, if he seems irrelevant, if you are wondering why it is that you're plotting along in the Christian life, I can tell you there's at least one reason, and it's this.

You don't think your situation is that bad. Maybe you need some tweaks, some life hacks, but you don't need something as radical as going from death to life, from a heart of stone into a heart of flesh.

This man, though, this blind man, has a physical problem meant to teach us a spiritual lesson. His need is so great. He is so desperate that he doesn't care who tells him to shut up.

He doesn't care how awkward or embarrassing the situation is. He needs the son of David to heal him. And glory and power and honor which are at the front of James and John's mind are irrelevant to him.

[14 : 50] Because there is something much, much more important. I warned you at the beginning of the Gospel of Mark when we preached chapter 1, verses 1 through 8, that it was not going to be an intellectual.

We're not here to have just profound insights into God's word, but we are instead here to be saved. I told you over and over that we have to admit real need, that that's the price of admission when it

comes to Jesus and his kingdom.

And the Gospel of Mark does just that. If you're reading carefully, if you're listening, if you're feeling it, the Gospel pushes on you. Mark is demanding a response.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus himself demands a response. Either we are for him or we are against him.

We were meant to answer at the beginning who we believe he is. And now Jesus presses us to answer what it is our hearts most long for.

[16:01] The reader is meant to connect the dots here and answer this question for herself. And so I ask you again, what is it that you want Jesus to do for you?

Have you slowed down enough to know what it is your heart craves and longs for? Maybe like James and John, you're hoping Jesus will finally provide the approval of others.

That if you can say the right things at the right time in church, that you'll be significant and powerful, that your life will matter. Maybe you're hoping that Jesus is going to provide you with a simple and easy family where things always go smoothly.

Maybe you're hoping he's going to provide you with a spouse. Maybe what you want from Jesus is simply to give those you love the worldly success that you want for them.

maybe you just want to be left alone, comfortable and at ease. And it doesn't feel like you're asking for too much.

[17:33] It probably didn't feel like too much to James and John. And we know that it didn't because they did. And Jesus is actually offering something far better.

Jesus says here, I will give you sight if you're willing to admit you're blind. I will give you sight if you're willing to admit that you're blind.

What is it that you actually want? What is it that you want me to do for you? And so really Jesus here is pulling together everything we've seen over the last four weeks and beyond because this is the upside down nature of the gospel all over again.

It is not for the strong but for the weak. It's not for those who are well but for those who are sick.

Remember John the Baptist at the very beginning came to prepare the way for Jesus and he prepared the way for Jesus in this sense specifically that people had to come to him and repent of their sins.

That they were naming what was wrong so that the doctor the great physician could come and heal them. And that's exactly what Jesus does here.

[19:01] Verse 52 Go your way your faith has made you well. And what is this man's fate? That he knows how great his need is and he doesn't give up until Jesus answers.

That is what we are meant to want Jesus to do for us. We are meant to see our great need of him. Jesus offers to heal you too.

if you will let him. If you will admit your need.

If you can say with the blind man son of David have mercy on me. as we think and look at our desires it may be sobering and convicting it may be hard and challenging you may be filled with a certain sense of conviction and need to change and duty and guilt and shame will not help you.

In fact that is what we just sang in our new song this morning. I invite you to look there with me on page 6. What we sang right before the sermon is a song about what it takes for Jesus to be beautiful to us for our desires to be pointed in the right direction and we are told this in the second verse at the end it is not a sense of right or duty.

[20:48] Duty will not change what our hearts long for. Knowing what is right will not change what it is we love but instead we are told here the sight of peerless worth.

In other words the sight of knowing and seeing that Jesus is more beautiful and more precious and greater than anything else. And what is it that is going to lead us to look at Jesus and see his beauty as more than any other beauty.

It is going to happen when that diamond is set against the black backdrop. It is going to happen when we see God's grace and we know our need.

Food is beautiful to a hungry man. Hospitals are welcome to those who need healing.

Guilt won't get you there. Duty won't get you there. It is Jesus and his beauty that changes our hearts and our desires.

[22:02] And so this passage is calling us to ask this question that we've seen already. I've mentioned many times what is it that you want me to do for you? What is the desire of your heart?

What is it that you long for more than anything else? Is it leading you to life or to death? The blind man here gives us the model and the answer.

What we need more than anything else is to be healed. When we know that, what we will long for more than anything else is for Jesus.

that is the sight of peerless worth. In the Lord of the Rings trilogy, the very beginning, we meet this character named Gollum.

And while he might not appear or act like it, Gollum was a hobbit at one point who has been twisted by the years that he spent with the ring. The thing that he loves and desires more than anything else, he's been with it for 500 years and it still hasn't been enough to satisfy him.

[23 : 22] And Yegala keeps running after it as we get to the end of the third book, the return of the king. Frodo and Sam have made it near the end of their journey. They just need to get into Mount Doom so that they can drop the ring into the lake of fire and destroy it forever.

But as they journey, Sam notices that someone is following them, and he realizes that Gollum is still after the ring. When they sleep at night, then he and Frodo take turns staying up, afraid Gollum will come to steal and kill.

As the journey continues, Frodo is so warned that Sam has to carry him at points to get to the top of Mount Doom. And near the end, it's so hard that they crawl on hands and knees to enter in so that they can get to this place to destroy the ring once and for all.

Sam thinks that they're done with Gollum until the very last moment when he comes, knocks Sam aside and begins a wrestling match with Frodo.

He wants the ring so much that he bites off Frodo's finger and then cries out in joy that he finally has it.

[24 : 32] gollum and then gollum falls off the ledge and he dies because he's burned in the fires of Mount Doom.

Gollum gets what he desires and it kills him. he burns in the lake of fire.

What do you want Jesus to do for you? This passage tells us it's a matter of life and death.

Let's pray. our father in heaven we thank you this morning that you know that we're feeble and fragile people and that you meet us at that place with your grace.

We ask that you would show us what it is that we long for and love. That you turn us to want you and your grace more than anything else.

[25 : 41] You'd show us our need for your mercy and that we would run to you with joy. We ask these things in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen. I invite you to stand for our closing hymn.