

Expository Tracts, No. 13.

# THE BLIND MEN.

BEING

THOUGHTS ON MATT. XX. 29–34.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. BISHOP RYLE, D.D.

---

DRUMMOND'S TRACT DEPOT, STIRLING.

---

Price 2s. per 100.

# THE BLIND MEN.

-----  
MATTHEW XX. 29-34.

- 29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.  
39 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David.  
31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David.  
32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?  
33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.  
34 So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

## READER,

You have in these verses a touching picture of an event in our Lord's history. He heals "two blind men sitting by the way side," near Jericho. The circumstances of the event contain several deeply interesting lessons, which all professing Christians would do well to remember. I invite you this day to hear what those lessons are.

1. Mark, for one thing, *what misery sin has brought into the world*. You are told that, as our Lord departed out of Jericho, He saw a very sorrowful sight. He beheld "two blind men sitting by the way side." Blindness is one of the bitter consequences which the fall of Adam has entailed on mankind. When God first created Adam and Eve, their bodies were perfectly healthy, and free from all defect or disease. But when sin came into the world there came in also sickness, pain, and death. There would have been no pain or sorrow among men if Adam had never fallen. There would have been no blindness if there had been no sin. Reader, how much we ought to hate sin!

Blindness of the bodily eyes, after all, is a light affliction compared to blindness of soul. With this blindness we are all naturally afflicted. We are born spiritually blind. We neither see our sins, nor God, nor Christ, nor heaven, nor hell, as we ought to do. The eyes of our understanding need to be opened by the Holy Ghost. Happy are they who have gone through this great change! Blessed are they who can say with truth, "I was blind, but now I see."

2. Mark, for another thing, *what strong faith may sometimes be found where it might least have been expected*. Blind as these two men were, they believed that Jesus was able to help them. They never saw any of our Lord's miracles. They knew Him only by hear-say, and not face to face.

And yet, as soon as they heard that He was passing by, they “cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.”

Reader, such faith as this may well put Christians of the present day to shame. With all our books of evidence, and lives of saints, and libraries of divinity, how few know anything of simple, child-like confidence in Christ’s mercy and Christ’s power. Even among those who are believers, the degree of faith is often strangely disproportionate to the privileges enjoyed. Many an unlearned man, who can only read his New Testament with difficulty, possesses the spirit of unhesitating trust in Christ’s advocacy, while deeply-read divines are harassed by questionings and doubts. They who, humanly speaking, ought to be first, are often last, and the last first. Have you faith? If you have, thank God for it. It is a great thing simply to believe.

3. Mark, for another thing, *what wisdom there is in using every opportunity for getting good for your soul*. These blind men sat “by the way-side.” Had they not done so, they might never have been healed. Jesus never returned to Jericho, and they might never have met with Him again.

You may see, in this simple fact, the importance of diligence in the use of means of grace. You should never neglect the house of God,—never forsake the assembling of yourself with God’s people,—never omit the reading of your Bible,—never let drop the practice of private prayer. These things, no doubt, will not save you without the grace of the Holy Ghost. Thousands make use of them in a merely formal way, and remain dead in trespasses and sins. But it is just in the use of these things that souls are converted and saved. They are the ways in which Jesus walks. It is they who “sit by the way-side” who are likely to be healed.

Reader, do you know the disease of your soul? Do you feel any desire to see the great Physician? If you do, you must not wait in idleness, saying, “If I am to be saved, I shall be saved.” You must arise and go to the road where Jesus walks. Who can tell but He will soon pass by for the last time? Take heed that you sit daily by the way-side.

4. Mark, for another thing, *the value of pains and perseverance in seeking Christ*. These blind men were “rebuked” by the multitude that accompanied our Lord. Men told them to “hold their peace.” But they were not to be silenced in this way. They felt their need of help. They cared nothing for the check they received. “They cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.”

You have in this part of the blind men’s conduct, a most important example. You are not to be deterred by opposition, or discouraged by difficulties, when you begin to seek the salvation of your soul. You must “pray always, and not faint.” (Luke xviii. 1.) Remember the parable of the importunate widow, and of the friend who came to borrow bread at midnight. Like

them you must press your petition at the throne of grace, and say, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” (Gen. xxxii. 26.) Friends, relatives, and neighbours may say unkind things, and reprove your earnestness. You may meet with coldness and want of sympathy, where you might have looked for help. But let none of these things move you. If you feel your disease, and want to find Jesus the great Physician,—if you know your sins, and desire to have them pardoned,—press on. “The violent take the kingdom by force.” (Matt. xi. 12.)

5. Mark, for another thing, *how gracious the Lord Jesus is to those who seek Him*, “He stood still and called” the blind men. He kindly asked them what it was they desired. He heard their petition, and did what they requested. He “had compassion on them, and touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight.”

You see here an illustration of that old truth, which you can never know too well,—the mercifulness of Christ’s heart towards the sons of men. The Lord Jesus is not only a mighty Saviour, but merciful, kind, and gracious, to a degree that man’s mind cannot conceive. Well might the apostle Paul say, that “the love of Christ passeth knowledge.” (Ephes. iii. 19.)

Reader, do you desire to become a true Christian, and yet feel ignorant of the way to begin? Take the advice I give you this day. Begin by coming as a poor helpless sinner to Christ, and cast yourself wholly and entirely on Christ’s love to sinners. He will not neglect you. He will not refuse to help you. He delights to show mercy to those who show Him their sins. There are no bounds to the love of Christ.

6. Mark, last of all, how *much, men will do for Christ, when they feel really grateful to Him*. You are told, that when the two blind men had received sight, “they followed Christ.” They felt they could not see too much of One who had done such great things for them. They could not do too much for Him to whom they owed health and happiness. They became His willing followers. They joined the company of His disciples.

Reader, you have in the words before you a most instructive example of what all true Christians ought to do. They ought to “follow Christ.” If they have really received benefit from Jesus, if they have really been washed in His blood, and cured of their soul’s diseases, they ought to follow Jesus as obedient disciples. They ought to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Beware of any religion which does not make you follow your Master. The faith which does not lead to practice, is no better than the faith of devils. The love which does not influence the life is worth nothing at all.