

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
Presbyterian Church

### “THE BLIND DISCIPLES & BLIND BEGGAR”

For individual study or group discussion

In many ways, the *Gospel of Luke* picks up where the book of Isaiah left off. Isaiah 42:18–19 reveals Israel’s failure to see: “*Hear, you deaf! and look, you blind, that you may see! Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the LORD?*” Throughout Luke we find that, more often than not, it’s the displaced and destitute who see Jesus for who he is, while the religious leaders and the privileged are blind to their need and Jesus’ mission. In Luke 18:31–43, ironically it’s the disciples who are blind to the necessity of Jesus’ death and resurrection, while a blind beggar clearly sees Jesus as the only one with the power to save.

#### The close disciples are blind to their need and to Jesus' mission. (vv. 31–34)

It is interesting to note that right after Peter declares, “See, we have left our homes and followed you” (v. 28), Luke records an account where the disciples are blind to their need and Jesus’ mission. Reminded by Christ that the way to Jerusalem is the way of the cross, the disciples still “did not grasp what was said” (v. 34). They failed to grasp that the coming of the Kingdom of God can only be seen and understood in the light of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection.

- Read Psalm 22:7, 17–18 and Isaiah 50:6, 53:3–5. Jesus wanted his disciples to be clear that his crucifixion and death were not unknown to God. Discuss the details found in these passages that surround Christ’s death, which was predicted hundreds of years beforehand.
- As Jesus nears the end of his journey in Jerusalem, he pulls his disciples aside, and for a third time, explains his coming death. Read Luke 9:22, 44; 17:25. What new information does Christ add this time?

#### The blind beggar clearly sees Jesus as the only one with the power to save. (vv. 35–43)

When the blind beggar hears from the crowd that “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by” (v. 37), he wastes no time calling out to Jesus. He may never have another opportunity like this again! Even when told to be silent, the beggar cries out all the louder, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Jesus stops and commands the beggar be brought near to him, and then he asks a simple question: “What do you want me to do for you?” The beggar responds out of his most profound need, “Lord, let me recover my sight,” because he sees in Christ the answer to his greatest need.

- Read Mark 10:35–52. In this parallel account of today’s story, James and John are asked the same question by Jesus, “What do you want me to do for you?” How do the two disciples answer Jesus’ question? Discuss the different responses.
- Throughout Luke, Jesus performs the miracles foretold by the prophet Isaiah, “*The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy*” (Isaiah 35:5–6a). Like he did for the blind beggar, Christ has the power to meet your most profound need. He raised the dead, healed the blind, and made the lame to walk. Like the beggar, do you believe that Jesus is the answer to the deepest needs in your life?
- C.S. Lewis said, “*Pain is God’s megaphone to speak to a deaf world.*” How has this been true in your life? What need is God using in your life to draw you to himself?

DATE: March 3, 2024

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 18:31–43

## Family Dinner Table

“Better to be a blind person and see with your heart, than to have two good eyes and see nothing!” – Helen Keller

In 1933, Helen Keller wrote an essay titled “*Three Days to See*” for *The Atlantic*. In the essay she muses about how much seeing people don’t see. Like the blind beggar of Luke 18:31–43, Keller perceived and understood things to which the world around her was blind. “*Only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight.*”<sup>1</sup> And so it is with the blind beggar. Before him stands a sea of people who see Jesus as only a man from Nazareth (v. 37), but the blind man calls to Jesus with his messianic designation, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (v. 38). Bartimaeus identifies Jesus as the promised Messiah, the Son of God, who alone can help him with his greatest need. In his cry for mercy, blind Bartimaeus teaches us two elements of faith: one, admitting our great need for a Savior, and two, recognizing that only Christ has the ability to meet that need.

- How has Jesus healed you from spiritual blindness and changed your life?
- If Jesus asked you, “What do you want me to do for you?” how would you answer?

### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Redeemer Presbyterian,  
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### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

May and Kev, supported  
missionary partners

<sup>1</sup>Keller, Helen. (2023, August 4). *Three Days to See*. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1933/01/three-days-to-see/371679/>