

I. Read Luke 18:35-42

- A. In verse 35, we read that a blind man, informed of Jesus' approach, cried out to Him for mercy. What was the response of those observing?

They tried to get him to be quiet.

Why would they have reacted to his pleadings this way?

There might be many reasons. In verse 35, it mentions "those who went before" (NKJV). If this is a reference to those in Jesus' entourage, they were probably trying to protect Jesus from unnecessary interruptions, similar to the time they discouraged those bringing infants to be blessed by Him (18:15). If this is a reference to those in front of the blind men who were simply spectators, they may have been bothered by the blind man yelling and pushing forward. Another possible explanation is that they were friends of the blind man who were embarrassed by his loud and unseemly behavior.

Compare the reaction of the blind man and the others to any hurting person's response to Jesus and the gospel.

When folks are in pain, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual, they become desperate for relief. Any glimmer of hope and healing causes them to literally cry out in the midst of pain. Hurting folks know instinctively that Jesus cares about their pain. They are drawn to Him by virtue of the character and nature of Jesus. Thus, a personal crisis often presents a window of opportunity to reach people.

How do observers sometimes react to their cries of pain?

Many folks want to quiet them down or just want them to go away. Hurting people may represent an embarrassing reminder of our vulnerability, a challenge we fear we are not up to, or they may be simply an inconvenience to us, requiring time and energy we feel we don't have.

- B. How did Jesus respond to the blind man's pleadings for help?
He immediately stopped and had the blind man brought forward. He took the man seriously and asked him a direct question "What do you want me to do for you?"

What can we learn from Jesus' response?

We must be ready at all times to listen to and help those in genuine need.

- C. Jesus was preparing to heal the blind man. How did his question to the blind man set the stage for this?

He asked him, "What do you want *me* to do *for you*?" This established the proper object of the man's faith. If a healing were to take place, it would be *Jesus who healed*, not the blind man himself. Biblical faith, whether saving faith or faith that results in healing, *must have Jesus* as its objective basis. In other words, access to God, favor by God, and God's positive response are based on the person and work of Christ alone (*Solus Christus*) and upon no one or *no-thing* else.

- D. In verse 40, the blind man responds appropriately to Jesus' question by saying, "Lord, that I may receive my sight" (NKJV). What might we infer from his response?

First, he knew that Jesus *had* both the authority and power to heal. This is indicated by the use of "Lord" as a form of address. *In this context*, it denoted Jesus' position of authority. Secondly, that he came to Jesus in utter humility — always a prerequisite condition for true

faith (James 4:6). Thirdly, that he *knew* that Jesus could indeed heal him and restore his sight. This is biblical faith.

- E. In verse 42, Jesus declares “Receive your sight; *your faith* has made you well.” How do some take this out of context and thereby misunderstand the role of faith in healing?

If you read only verse 42, it appears that the blind man’s faith is itself an internal force of some sort that can heal when properly focused. This is essentially the understanding of most charismatic, Pentecostal, and Christian Science healers. Verse 42 cannot be understood apart from verse 40. It is clear here that it is only Jesus, separate and apart from anything within the man, who must restore the man’s sight. The blind man’s faith becomes simply a *channel* or *means* of receiving the miracle. Our dependence on God for miracles becomes even more apparent when we recall that even faith must come from God. So the blind man was given, by God’s grace, the gift of faith, thus enabling him to know and believe that Christ could and, in this instance, would heal him.

- F. What was the effect of the miracle on those observing? (verses 42, 43)

They all glorified and praised God. They did not focus on the man or any other man, but upon God alone. *Sola Deo Gloria!*

What is one way we can know the real source of supposed miracles in our day?

Who gets the glory, and what impact does the miracle have on the beneficiary? Benny Hinn claims to have healed Muslims and he sees no inconsistency in the fact that they remained Muslims.

How did the man’s response to his own healing demonstrate a genuine work of God?

He *followed* Him. When folks claim God has performed a miracle in their lives, yet there continues to be no true obedience and faithful discipleship evidenced, the supposed miracle comes from another source than God. You judge a tree by the fruit that it bears. The blind man quite literally lived out the preface to the Westminster Shorter Catechism. What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him forever!

- G. Using the healing of the blind man as an analogy of salvation, what might we expect from those truly saved? (Hint: Receiving sight and being healed represent regeneration and conversion).

Before we are regenerated, we are walking in spiritual darkness. Only God can take that darkness (blindness) away. When He miraculously grants us spiritual sight by making us alive spiritually and redeeming us, He has healed us. Our obvious response at that point is to do like the healed blind man — glorify God and follow him! Those who claim to have experienced a true conversion but refuse to follow Christ are deluding themselves.

- H. What is the answer for someone that has failed to place their faith in Christ alone for salvation? (See Acts 16:25-32.)

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ today!