



24 - 30 October 2021 Blind faith

**Related Bible reading(s): Mark 10.46-52**

## Bible study on Mark 10. 46-52

*This study can be used by a small family/household group, or by an online group, or – sometimes with a little adaptation – by an individual.*

See our [Guidelines for a weekly Bible study](#)

### **Begin with an opening prayer**

All seeing God,  
you are so far beyond our understanding,  
yet you want to meet with us.  
You call us into your presence,  
as the crowd called the blind man to come to Jesus.  
We come to you now, mighty Lord,  
gathered expectantly,  
ready to worship and learn from you.  
May we have eyes open to see you  
and hearts willing to be seen by you  
**Amen.**

### **Read the passage**

*Consider different ways to read the text. For example, hearing it in more than one version of the Bible.*

*In an online group, you could share parts between those present, or use/adapt this week's Share the Word suggestion: Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to go to Share the Word and scroll down to find the Gospel reading.*

### **Explore and respond to the text**

*Start by reading the Bible notes below. You may want to read them more than once, or pause after each paragraph to reflect on what you have read.*

### **Bible notes**

Early in this section of Mark's Gospel, there is a story of the healing of a blind man (8.22-26), immediately before Peter's confession in response to Jesus' question: 'Who do you say I am?' Now, as the section draws to a close, we have a second story about the healing of a blind man. But in this one, the man has a name. And Bartimaeus is able to name Jesus and identify him as 'the Son of David' (v.47). Of course, at this point, Bartimaeus can't see who is passing. He knows because he is told, because he hears others – but he goes further. He sees something that the rest of the crowd doesn't notice. Note the crowd's response to Bartimaeus (v.48). After all, he's only a beggar so he doesn't count! But Jesus does stop, and he does speak to Bartimaeus. But what are we to make of his question to him (v.51)? Is this question deeper than it might appear to be? Is it about what Bartimaeus really wants? In verse 52, faith is what reaches out. It is confidence that Jesus holds the key and that he can and will act. It is about hope and expectations that are fulfilled. The section begins and ends with blindness, but it is all about discipleship too (8.31-38). We have repeatedly seen Jesus' disciples misunderstand or get discipleship wrong. But Bartimaeus, the outsider, ends the section by getting it right, and he follows Jesus along the road to Jerusalem, to David's city.

See also:



### **The way we live matters**

Tim Herbert introduces the readings in this issue, in conversation with Siggy Parratt-Halbert.

## **Reflection**

*Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading. This idea may help.*

A young man is playing the violin outside the tube station. People are rushing by – places to go, trains to catch. A young girl listens intently for a while – but her parents pull her away. She is reluctant and looks back as they go on their way. In the violinist's hat are a few small coins. The previous night, the same virtuoso violinist had played to a packed audience at a London venue. Everyone there had paid at least £50 for a seat. The music, however, was the same. The young player wanted to bring his music to everyone, no barriers or restrictions. But those passing saw only a busker playing for his tea. But for the little girl – did that moment kindle a desire to play the violin? Did she pursue that calling? Who knows? But vocations are made in such brief moments, if only we have eyes to see, ears to hear and faith to respond.

## **Questions for reflection**

*You may wish to use these questions and the picture to help you think about or discuss issues of sharing.*



Click on the image to view a larger version or use the *Jump menu* to go to *This week's images*. For artist's details, see [this issue's illustrators](#).

## Questions

- What do you see – what is it?
- Can you think of a time when faith has helped you to see something differently?
- What does it feel like to see things clearly, and to be seen

## A simple worship activity

Bartimaeus asks for sight, but what might he see?

- Invite people to cut images and articles from magazines, charity leaflets, newspapers, and so on, to make three collections representing 'pictures of the world': the 'good', the 'bad' and the 'ugly'. That is:
  - 1) Things that make you rejoice;
  - 2) Things that are bad or disastrous;
  - 3) Things that we tend to avoid because they are difficult.
- Ask people to put their contributions on one of three tables (stations labelled 'good', 'bad' and 'ugly' respectively), spread out around the worship space.
- Invite everyone to visit each station, spending time looking at the material and offering whatever thoughts come to mind as prayer for the various situations represented. Allow plenty of time for this. Play quiet background music such as Jodi Page Clark's 'Look around you, can you see?'

*Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to go to more activities in Explore and respond.*

## Prayer

*Adapt to your local context.*

## A prayer of thanksgiving

We thank you, Lord,  
that you are a God of action – and interaction.  
You see and want to be seen by us.  
We thank you for the amazing sights you have for us,  
if we are prepared to call on you.  
We thank you that you are a God of healing,  
and whichever way you choose to act is always best.  
We thank you, Lord.

**Amen.**

*Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to find more prayers, including up-to-date intercessions.*

### **A prayer to end the Bible study**

Lord, may we look out into your world  
with your eyes, listen with your ears,  
and may we speak and love in your name.

**Amen.**

### **Go with God 24/7**

*Encourage everyone to put their faith into action.*

When you open your eyes every morning, thank God that you are seen and known. Look out for those who are on the edges and unseen. Look for opportunities to engage with them.

*Encourage everyone to explore their faith this week with the **ROOTS at home** resource.*

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