



## Blind Spots: Bartimaeus' Request

### OPENING PRAYER

Invite a member of the group to lead prayer.

**Read Mark 10:46-48.**

“They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’ Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’”

**WEEK ONE: BARTIMAEUS' REQUEST**

In Mark 10:32-34, Jesus informs the disciples for the third time about his death and Resurrection. Jesus makes it clear that death is waiting for him when they reach their destination of Jerusalem. Right after, James and John ask to sit in places of honor and prestige when Jesus comes into His glory. Of course, this upsets the rest of the disciples. As a group, they seem to be blind to the reality of Jesus had told them about his death and resurrection, as well as his purpose. The disciples were seeking to lift themselves up, while Jesus was going to Jerusalem to lay down his life to lift humanity from the bondage of sin and from the dark valley of death. Jericho was on the way to Jerusalem. As Jesus, the disciples, and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus. The crowd tried to silence him, but he cried out even more loudly. Although he had lost his sight, he heard that Jesus was passing through. This part of Scripture reminds me of the verse from the hymn Amazing Grace, "I was lost but now I am found, was blind but now I see." By the grace of God, Bartimaeus was in the right place at the right time to hear the good news that Jesus was passing through. Bartimaeus then responded in faith by acting on the news that he had heard. He cried out, "Jesus, Son of David have mercy on me!" The grace of God helped him see that Jesus is the Messiah and helped recognize his need for Jesus. Bartimaeus knows that he cannot heal himself. He needs Jesus to save/heal him.

# GROUP REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Share where you've seen God at work in your life this week.

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Where are we blind?

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What blinds us?

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If you heard that Jesus was passing through Southlake, what would you beg for? What are you in need of today?

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What does it look like for us to cry out to the Lord? To what lengths would go to to get God's attention?

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# PRAISE AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Please go around the group and have each person share a praise for this week and a prayer request/concern.

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## CLOSING PRAYER

Have a volunteer lead closing prayer: asking for prayer concerns and lifting up the needs of the group.

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# WC ENCOUNTER GROUPS CURRICULUM

## WEEK ONE: BARTIMAEUS' REQUEST

### FAMILY ENCOUNTER

## WEEK ONE

Supplies:

- Bible
- Bandana, sleep mask or blindfold
- Sacred Candle & Matches/Lighter

## WELCOMING GOD:

Gather together, and welcome God into this time and space through the lighting of a candle. Take this moment to pause briefly and sit quietly in this light for a few moments, allowing time for everyone to relax their body, mind, and spirit for this time. In these moments, the invitation is to become aware of God's presence with and amongst you as a family.

## SHARING WITH GOD AND ONE ANOTHER:

Say: "If anything is on our minds that makes it difficult for us to focus, let's share it now and then let it go."

- Whoever leads this portion might share what is on his or her mind to model this. Give time for each person to respond. When everyone has responded that would like to, invite everyone to place their hands out and lift them up as we give these distractions to God.

OR you can invite the family to pray together as one person leads, saying the following:

"Dear Loving God, The One who knows our hearts, celebrates our victories, grieves with us during our losses, and gives us the strength to overcome our challenges. Please help us to let go of the distractions we name now, so that we can openly share with our family and may encounter you in a special way today. Our distractions are... (let there be silence here, so everyone has an opportunity to name aloud what is distracting them). In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen."

## ENCOUNTERING GOD:

Read aloud: Mark 10:46-47.

- Take turns reading the Scripture or have a different family member read the Scripture each week.

"They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'"

## ENCOUNTERING EACH OTHER:

Say: “For the next few weeks, we are going to be laser-focused on the story of Bartimaeus, a blind man who encountered Jesus in one of the most interesting ways. When we meet him, Bartimaeus is sitting by the road begging. For what, we wonder. Food? Money? Friendship? Acknowledgement? All of these? Then, Bartimaeus hears that Jesus walks by and asks for Jesus to have mercy on him.”

Activity: Blindfold one family member. Then, while other family members are walking around nearby, have one person guide the blindfolded family member through the house without telling him or her where the other family members are (they should be making noise). You can guide by voice or by placing your hands on the blindfolded person’s shoulders. Have each family member take turns being the blindfolded person.

### Discussion Questions

- How did it feel walking around while others are walking around you?
- What does it feel like to not see?
- Who was it harder to trust: your guide or the people walking around you?
- How do you think it felt to be sitting on the roadside begging, and not able to see how people were responding - or even if they looked at you at all?
- What do you think Bartimaeus meant when he asked for mercy?

Say: “When Bartimaeus heard Jesus was coming, he knew that Jesus could be trusted and immediately asked for mercy. Think about your life: are there areas that you can trust Jesus with more? What are they?”

\*When everyone has finished sharing, repeat the prayer of Bartimaeus: “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

## ENCOUNTERING GOD TOGETHER:

Say: “May we pray together as a family...”

Let us share our prayers for the world: for our country and leaders, for other countries and their leaders...

Let us share our prayers for the church, ministers, and spiritual leaders...

Let us share our prayers for our teachers, first responders, friends, and others in the community...

Let us share our prayers for our family and our own specific needs...”

If you would like to record the people for whom you pray, use the next few lines to do so:

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\*You can also record these requests in a family prayer journal if you are using one.

# ENCOUNTERING TRANSFORMATION TOGETHER:

Pray aloud together:

God, we welcomed you here and read Your Word,  
we prayed and we spent time with you,  
we rested in your love for us,  
and we did this all together.

Now, we promise to love one another and others as you love us.  
In the name of Christ. Amen.

# BLESSING ONE ANOTHER FOR OUR ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WORLD:

Invite family members to bless one another using any of the examples below or their own blessings.

Examples:

- "I love you. God loves you. I pray God blesses you."
- "God loves you exactly like you are—and so do I."
- "I love the gifts God has given you and how you bless the world with them."

# DAILY REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Please answer these during your personal devotional time at the end of the day or do it as a couple or family.

Where have you seen God today? For the children, we say, "what made you happy today?"

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What broke your heart or made you sad today?

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What good thing did you do for someone else today?

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What are you thankful for today?

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