



Love. Live. Lead.

Take Heart

Discussion Questions:

1) Take a moment to slowly read our focus Scripture for the week. **Mark 10:46-52**

46 And they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48 And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; He is calling you." 50 And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 And Jesus said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And the blind man said to Him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." 52 And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately, he recovered his sight and followed Him on the way. What are your thoughts on this story?

What aspects of this story about our needs and Jesus' ability to address them speaks to your needs at this time in your life?

2) One of the first things that strikes me as I read this story is Bartimaeus's enthusiastic faith. He calls Jesus the son of David, which was a title used for the Messiah. So, when many were struggling to understand who Jesus was, this blind beggar saw the truth that Jesus was the son of God. He is also not discouraged or quieted by the crowd. He enthusiastically shouts to Jesus. Even his request demonstrates his faith. He says, **"Have mercy on me."** By crying out to Jesus with this plea for help, he indicates that he knows Jesus has tremendous power and can help him. Bartimaeus is living out the invitation that we find in **Hebrews 4:16. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.** Do you struggle to approach God with enthusiastic confidence? Do you sometimes find yourself asking God to help as a last resort after you've exhausted all your efforts?

Do you find it difficult to believe God will grant you mercy and grace when you are in need? How do you think you can cultivate the kind of faith that we see in this story?

3) In verse 49 it is revealed, **And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; He is calling you.”** As you read the story, it's clear that Jesus could personally call him. But instead, He uses this moment to teach a fundamental principle. He asks the people attempting to silence Bartimaeus to invite him to come to Jesus. The principle I see at work here is that God chooses to work through people. God doesn't need to use frail and weak human beings, but He does. God's plan is to involve us in His work. He is willing to empower, direct, calm, and correct us, but He insists on doing His work through us. We see the same principle at work as Jesus addresses His disciples after His resurrection. **Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.** This verse clearly teaches that God provides the power, but that He intends to work through us. Take a moment to process the implications of this idea with your group.

We might gain further clarity on how we join God in His work by considering this principle in two separate categories:

- The first category I would call planned activities. Planned activities are things that we know we will be a part of and we can schedule them and plan them. Coming to your community group is obviously a planned activity.
- The second category could be categorized as unplanned interruptions. The story that is our focus today involves an unplanned interruption. We should plan to join God in His work through both planned activities and unplanned interruptions. This approach not only allows us to serve God, but also presents opportunities for personal growth and spiritual development. Do you agree? Where you are currently allowing God to work through you in planned activities?

Tell the story of a time when you took advantage or didn't take advantage of, serving God through an unplanned interruption.

4) One last detail from the story begins as Bartimaeus is sitting by the roadside. He is not following Jesus or involved. He's more or less on the sidelines, only concerned about his own needs. Then he encounters Jesus. **52 And Jesus said to Him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately, he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.** Did you catch that last detail? He follows Christ. Sometimes, we may feel like we are sitting on the sidelines, not really pursuing an intimate relationship with Christ and allowing Him to do His work through us. At other times, we are following Him, pursuing His direction in learning more about Him and growing in our relationship with Him. Take a moment to discuss where you personally are right now. Have you been sidelined by a busy schedule, some wounds, or grief in your life, or other distractions, or are you enthusiastically following Jesus?