

**(Slide 1 at introduction)**

**INTRODUCTION**

**IMAGE:** The Office: Darrell/Dwight pursuing the manager position.

**HOOK:** Everyone knows someone like Dwight or Darrell, pursuing good things in the wrong way. If we're honest, a lot of the time that someone is us! It is important to understand what God says about seeking honor or acclaim.

**SUBJECT:** How should we view God's mission, so as not to become spiritually blind?

**PREVIEW:** Today we will see an example of how self-importance can leave us spiritually blind, how humility allows us to spiritually see, and how Jesus uses moments like these to teach us something about his agenda.

**Mark 10:35-52, CSB**

**THESE ARE THE WORDS OF OUR LORD: (transition to Slide 2)**

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him and said, "Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask you."

"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked them.

They answered him, "Allow us to sit at your right and at your left in your glory."

Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you're asking. Are you able to drink the cup I drink or to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

"We are able," they told him. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink, and you will be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with. **(transition to Slide 3)** But to sit at my right or left is not mine to give; instead, it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

When the ten disciples heard this, they began to be indignant with James and John. Jesus called them over and said to them, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them. But it is not so among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all. **(transition to Slide 4)** For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

They came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting by the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many

warned him to keep quiet, but he was crying out all the more, “Have mercy on me, Son of David!”

Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called the blind man and said to him, “Have courage! Get up; he’s calling for you.” **(transition to Slide 5)** He threw off his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus. Then Jesus answered him, “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Rabboni,” the blind man said to him, “I want to see.”

Jesus said to him, “Go, your faith has saved you.” Immediately he could see and began to follow Jesus on the road.

## **BODY**

### **I. The physically seeing disciples are spiritually blind (re-read vv. 37, 40-41) (transition to slide 6)**

- A. Disciples felt entitled to Kingdom status.
- B. They asked something of Jesus that wasn’t his to give.
- C. This causes infighting amongst the disciples
- D. Jesus reorients their paradigm. (re-read vv. 42-45) **(slide 7)**
  - 1. Using status or importance to lift one’s self up or tear someone else down is to be expected outside of the church, but not within it
  - 2. Even Jesus lowered himself to serve and give of himself.

### **II. The physically blind man spiritually sees (reread vv. 46-48) (slide 8)**

- A. Bartimaeus is interested in being made whole, not in being exalted
  - 1. He cries out to the Messiah for mercy
    - a) How do we know Bartimaeus believes he’s the Messiah?
    - b) He refers to Jesus as the Son of David, an explicitly Messianic title: (Matt. 22:42) **(Slide 9)**
  - 2. He casts his lot in with Christ and him alone
    - a) He likely would have been sitting cross-legged
    - b) His cloak would have been tucked into a pocket of sorts
      - (1) A catch-tray for alms that were being given
      - (2) Easy to spread and cover for safety
      - (3) Casting this aside would mean giving up his very livelihood! (hammer home this point)
    - c) Leaving that behind, he comes to Jesus
  - 3. He asks for his sight, not status.
  - 4. Upon being healed, he follows Jesus to Jerusalem, along the way to his crucifixion

- B. Bartimaeus saw physically so the disciples would better see spiritually (REPEAT)**
1. Notice the different responses to “What do you want me to do for you?”  
**(transition to Slide 10)**

“What do you want me to do for you?” he asked them. They answered him, “Allow us to sit at your right and at your left in your glory.”

Then Jesus answered him, “What do you want me to do for you?”  
“Rabboni,” the blind man said to him, “I want to see.”

2. Bartimaeus asks rightly, within both Christ’s authority and the scope of his mission
3. Jesus’ act of service and call to discipleship for Bartimaeus is a greater call to discipleship for us. We must learn to spiritually see, but all too often we, like the disciples, are spiritually blind.

**III. How do we become spiritually blind, or spiritually seeing? (transition to slide 11)**

- A.** We all know “Christians” who use the name wrongly for entitlement. Oftentimes it’s us!
1. Perhaps it’s us asking God for special favors?
  2. To help us win our sporting event?
  3. To grant our fleeting, temporal wishes?
  4. To “declare” that God must grant us victory in a given situation?
  5. To feel self-important or have the spotlight on us?
- B.** Rather than acting like the disciples, we should act like Bartimaeus and cry out for healing of our spiritual blindness
1. The disciples were not in tune with Christ’s mission
    - a) They were spiritually blind
    - b) As a result, they asked amiss
  2. Bartimaeus recognized who Jesus was *and* what he was doing
    - a) He took his opportunity and asked Christ for mercy
    - b) Instead of asking for something that wasn’t within Christ’s agenda, he also asked for things *only Christ could give!* (REPEAT!)
      - (1) Mercy/forgiveness
      - (2) Sight to the blind
  3. Like Bartimaeus, our faith is confirmed when we cry out to him
- C.** For the Christian, our faith is made evident by following Jesus
1. Jesus has moved to rescue us

2. The only good and proper response is to follow him out of gratitude for what he has done. (REPEAT)
3. In this context, that means to live a life of service to others -- to be a slave to all **(transition to slide 12)**

D. In verse 44, the word “slave” in Greek is *doulos*.

1. This word is a generic term for slave throughout the New Testament and can take on a variety of meanings, depending on the verse’s context.
2. Contextually, in this particular passage it means to be “devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests” (Strong’s definition)
3. This is reflected in Philippians 2:3

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. (REPEAT)

E. What does this look like to the Christian? **(transition to Slide 13)**

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Clothe the needy.
3. Tend to the homeless.
4. Adopt the orphan.
5. While doing all the above, introduce them to Christ!

### CONCLUSION (APPLYING THE WORD - transition to Slide 14)

- I. Do I feel a sense of entitlement as a disciple of Christ?
  - A. Am I doing any of the things mentioned earlier?
  - B. Asking God for special favor?
  - C. To grant fleeting, temporal wishes?
  - D. Declaring that God must grant victory in a given situation?
  - E. To feel self-important or have the spotlight?
  - F. To presume special dispensation that exempts me from his mission and ways?
- II. In what areas am I spiritually blind to what God is doing?
  - A. This dovetails from the first question.
  - B. How is a sense of entitlement blinding me to God’s agenda?
  - C. Is there something I should be doing that I can’t see?
- III. What is God trying to show me about who he is? Everything in life should be viewed through this question!
- IV. When we get to the end, we will not hear anything but **(transition to Slide 15)**, Well done, my good and faithful:

Pastor	Missionary	Bishop	Teacher	Evangelist
Singer	Apostle	Worship Leader	Preacher	<u>Servant</u>