



TAMPA LIFE CHURCH

CLOAKED

BIBLE STUDY SERIES

PART 1

Part 1: The Miracle Begins With What You Hear



INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Gospels, we discover that Jesus rarely performed miracles the way people expected. Sometimes He spoke a word. Sometimes He touched the sick. Sometimes He placed mud upon blind eyes. Sometimes He commanded a crippled man to rise. Yet before many miracles ever manifested outwardly, something first happened inwardly. God awakened faith.

The story of Blind Bartimaeus demonstrates this truth beautifully. Before he ever saw Jesus, he heard about Him. Before his eyes were opened, his heart was awakened. Before his condition changed, his faith changed. Mark tells us that while Bartimaeus was still sitting beside the road wearing the garments that identified him as a blind beggar, one piece of information reached his ears: “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” That single announcement interrupted years of hopelessness. His miracle did not begin when Jesus touched his eyes. His miracle began the moment he believed what he heard.

This is still God’s pattern today. Many people are waiting to see something before they believe, but Scripture consistently teaches that faith begins in the opposite order. We hear God’s Word, faith is conceived in our hearts, and then we begin to see God move. Long before circumstances change around us, God changes something within us.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

ROMANS 10:17 (KJV)



PART

FAITH IS BORN THROUGH HEARING

01

Bartimaeus had no visual evidence that his situation was about to change. His eyes remained blind. His circumstances remained the same. The crowd surrounding him had no expectation that anything unusual was about to happen. Yet one statement transformed everything: “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” That announcement became the birthplace of faith.

This teaches us that God often begins His greatest works through our ears before He ever works through our eyes. Faith is never manufactured by human optimism or positive thinking. It is produced when God's Word enters a receptive heart. Hearing becomes the doorway through which hope enters a hopeless situation. What Bartimaeus heard contradicted everything he had experienced for years. His blindness told him nothing would ever change, but God's presence announced that change was now possible.

Many believers spend their lives waiting until they can see God's hand before they trust His promises. Scripture teaches the opposite. God speaks first. Faith responds. Then miracles follow. Abraham believed before Isaac was born. Noah built before rain ever fell. Joshua marched before the walls collapsed. Likewise, Bartimaeus cried out before he received his sight. Every one of these examples reminds us that hearing God's voice always precedes seeing God's power.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

HEBREWS 11:1 (KJV)

Faith is not built upon visible evidence. It is confidence in the invisible Word of God. The world says, “Seeing is believing.” The Kingdom of God says, “Believing is seeing.”

Because of this, we must guard what continually enters our hearts. Every message we hear is building either faith or fear. Every conversation is either strengthening confidence in God or reinforcing discouragement. What we repeatedly allow into our minds eventually becomes the foundation upon which we interpret our lives.

As Pastor powerfully stated:

“What you hear creates what you did not yet have the strength to see.”

That principle explains why one word from God can accomplish more than years of human reasoning. God's Word creates vision before our eyes ever witness the fulfillment.

 REFLECT

*What have you been hearing lately about your situation, and is it building faith or feeding doubt?
Write one promise of God you need to start declaring over your circumstances this week.*

PART

THE VOICES WE ENTERTAIN SHAPE THE LIVES WE
LIVE

02 CLOAKED

One of the strongest lessons in this passage is that not every voice deserves equal access to our hearts. Bartimaeus was surrounded by many voices. Some ignored him. Others tolerated him. Still others attempted to silence him. Only one voice ultimately led him toward freedom.

The voices surrounding us become architects of our spiritual future. If we continually listen to fear, we will begin to expect defeat. If we continually hear criticism, we will eventually believe we are incapable. If we constantly entertain compromise, holiness slowly becomes optional. What enters our ears eventually influences our decisions, and our decisions shape our destiny.

Solomon understood this principle when he wrote:

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

PROVERBS 4:23 (KJV)

Guarding the heart includes guarding what continually enters it. We cannot consistently feed our spirits discouragement, unbelief, worldly philosophies, and spiritual indifference while expecting vibrant faith to flourish. Faith requires healthy spiritual nourishment.

Jesus emphasized this same principle:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

JOHN 10:27 (KJV)

Notice the order. His sheep first hear His voice. Then they follow. Obedience is always preceded by hearing.

Likewise, Revelation repeatedly declares:

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

REVELATION 2:7 (KJV)

The greatest spiritual question is not merely, “What am I hearing?” but, “Whose voice am I allowing to define my reality?”

The wrong voices often encourage us to manage our dysfunction instead of overcoming it. They normalize spiritual complacency and teach us to coexist with the very things Jesus came to deliver us from. God's voice never leaves us comfortable in bondage. It always calls us higher.

Bartimaeus teaches us that breakthrough often begins the moment we choose which voice deserves our attention.

 REFLECT

Which voices in your life are shaping how you see your future? Is there a voice you need to lower, and a voice you need to let closer?



PART

GOD OFTEN SPEAKS THROUGH THE RIGHT PEOPLE

03

One of the most fascinating moments in Bartimaeus' story occurs after Jesus hears his cry. The same crowd that moments earlier tried to silence him suddenly delivers a completely different message.

"And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee."

MARK 10:49 (KJV)

The people had not changed because they suddenly became compassionate. They changed because Jesus spoke. One word from Christ transformed the attitude of the crowd. Those who had discouraged him became the very ones announcing his opportunity.

This presents Bartimaeus with a new challenge. Moments before, these same voices had proven themselves untrustworthy. Now they were speaking the words of Jesus. He had to decide whether he would reject the message because of the messenger or recognize that God was using imperfect people to direct him toward his miracle.

We often face the same decision. Sometimes God places people in our lives who recognize what He is doing before we do. They encourage us when we cannot encourage ourselves. They remind us of God's promises when discouragement clouds our vision. They call us to rise when everything inside us wants to remain seated.

Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly used people to position others for breakthrough. Nathan confronted David and led him toward repentance. Mordecai challenged Esther to embrace her purpose. Barnabas believed in Saul when others feared him and introduced him to the apostles. Ananias laid hands on the man who had once persecuted the church and became the instrument through which Saul received his sight and the Holy Ghost.

God has always used faithful voices to awaken sleeping faith.

This reminds us that we should never isolate ourselves from godly relationships. Christianity was never designed to be lived alone. The Body of Christ exists because each member supplies strength, encouragement, correction, and hope to another.

Paul writes,

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

GALATIANS 6:2 (KJV)

Sometimes the greatest ministry we can offer another believer is simply recognizing their moment. We may see God's hand moving in someone's life before they have the faith to see it themselves. A timely word of encouragement, a sincere prayer, or a simple reminder that "God is not finished with you" may become the very thing that keeps someone from giving up.

Likewise, we must remain humble enough to receive encouragement ourselves. Pride often convinces us that we do not need anyone speaking into our lives. Yet spiritual maturity recognizes that God frequently confirms His direction through the voices of faithful brothers and sisters.

There are people whose words make us comfortable remaining where we are. Then there are people whose words lovingly challenge us to become everything God intends us to be. The difference between those two relationships can determine the direction of our spiritual lives.

As Proverbs reminds us,

“Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”

PROVERBS 27:17 (KJV)

Healthy spiritual relationships never exist merely to comfort us. They exist to sharpen us.

REFLECT

Who has God placed in your life to speak encouragement, correction, or direction? Are you humble enough to receive it, even when the messenger surprises you?



PART

EVERY GOD MOMENT REQUIRES A RESPONSE

04

Pastor beautifully emphasized that Bartimaeus recognized something many people completely missed. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. This was one of the final miracles before the crucifixion. Bartimaeus did not know the timeline of Christ's ministry, but something inside him recognized, "This is my moment."

There are moments in our walk with God that carry unusual significance. While God is always present, there are seasons when His Spirit begins drawing us with greater urgency. Conviction becomes stronger. Worship feels deeper. His Word becomes clearer. Opportunities for obedience suddenly appear before us. These are divine appointments, moments that invite us to step into a new level of faith.

The danger is that such moments can easily be missed if we become spiritually distracted or complacent.

The writer of Hebrews repeatedly warns believers,

"To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts..."

HEBREWS 3:15 (KJV)

Notice once again that hearing precedes responding. Every divine invitation begins with God's voice, but it requires our obedience. God never forces anyone into transformation. He calls, and we answer.

Throughout Scripture, those who experienced the greatest miracles were those who recognized their moment and acted immediately. Peter stepped out of the boat while the opportunity was still before him. Zacchaeus hurried down from the sycamore tree when Jesus called his name. The woman with the issue of blood pressed through the crowd before Jesus passed by. None of them postponed their response.

Bartimaeus could have reasoned, "Perhaps Jesus will come back another day." He could have allowed embarrassment, fear, or disappointment to silence his cry. Instead, he recognized that delayed obedience is often disguised as missed opportunity.

Many believers spend years waiting for a "better time" to fully surrender, to answer God's call, to forgive, to serve, or to pursue deeper intimacy with Christ. Yet Scripture repeatedly teaches that God's invitation is always answered in the present.

Isaiah declares,

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

ISAIAH 55:6 (KJV)

When God creates a moment of conviction, worship, repentance, or calling, wisdom responds immediately. Every God moment carries within it the potential to become a turning point that changes the direction of an entire life.

Bartimaeus refused to let his moment become another missed opportunity. His desperation overcame his hesitation, and his faith propelled him toward the One who could completely transform his future. That

same invitation still stands before every believer today. The question is not whether God is speaking. The question is whether we are willing to respond when He does.

REFLECT

Is there a moment of conviction or invitation you have been putting off? What would it look like to respond to God today instead of waiting for a better time?



PART

**THE WRONG VOICES WANT YOU COMFORTABLE.
JESUS CALLS YOU HIGHER.**

05

One of the most profound observations Pastor made is that Bartimaeus was not simply sitting because he was physically blind. He was seated because life had taught him to remain there. His disappointments had seated him. His losses had seated him. His identity had become attached to his condition, and the crowd had grown comfortable seeing him that way.

Mark intentionally tells us,

"...blind Bartimaeus... sat by the highway side begging."

MARK 10:46 (KJV)

This is more than a description of his location. It is a picture of his spiritual posture. He had accepted the only life he had ever known.

How many believers find themselves in the same position? They are no longer expecting growth. They are no longer pursuing deeper prayer. They have accepted recurring struggles as permanent realities. They have learned how to survive rather than how to overcome.

Jesus never leaves people where He finds them.

Throughout the Gospels, every encounter with Christ is an invitation to rise. He called fishermen to leave their nets. He called Matthew to leave the tax table. He called Lazarus to come out of the grave. He called the crippled man to take up his bed. Now He calls Bartimaeus to stand.

The Kingdom of God is always moving people from where they are to where He intends them to be.

This is why the voices surrounding us matter so much. Some people celebrate our potential. Others become comfortable with our dysfunction. There are people who will sympathize with our pain but never encourage us toward transformation. They hand us emotional "coins" that temporarily ease our discomfort while never pointing us toward complete freedom.

Jesus does not merely comfort broken people. He restores them.

Paul describes this process beautifully:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (KJV)

Notice that salvation is not simply an improved version of the old life. It is a new creation. Christ never intended us to become better-managed sinners. He intended us to become transformed disciples.

This explains why genuine preaching sometimes makes us uncomfortable. God's Word refuses to leave us seated. It exposes areas where we have settled, confronts attitudes we have justified, and invites us

into greater obedience.

The writer of Hebrews explains,

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword...”

HEBREWS 4:12 (KJV)

The Word does not merely inform us. It transforms us. Every time we hear biblical truth, we are presented with a choice. We can remain seated in our old identity, or we can rise into the new identity Christ offers.

Bartimaeus teaches us that remaining where we are is often more dangerous than taking the risk of responding to Jesus. The greatest tragedy would not have been remaining blind. The greatest tragedy would have been hearing Jesus call and refusing to stand.

REFLECT

Where in your life have you settled, accepting a limitation as your identity? What is Jesus calling you to rise from this season?

PART

**SOCIAL PRESSURE CAN SILENCE FAITH, BUT DESPERATION
REFUSES TO BE QUIET**

06 CLOAKED

Mark tells us that when Bartimaeus cried out for mercy, many people immediately rebuked him.

“And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal...”

MARK 10:48 (KJV)

The crowd believed his worship was inappropriate. His desperation disrupted their order. His loud cries embarrassed those around him. To them, he was making too much noise.

Yet what the crowd considered excessive, Jesus considered faith.

This principle has never changed. The closer someone comes to breakthrough, the more opposition they often encounter. The enemy understands that desperation is dangerous because desperation refuses to remain passive. Desperate people pray differently. They worship differently. They pursue God differently because they understand they have nowhere else to turn.

Throughout Scripture, those who received miracles were rarely the quietest people in the room.

The woman with the issue of blood pressed through an entire crowd because remaining where she was was no longer acceptable. The four men carrying the paralytic tore open a roof because ordinary access would not satisfy them. Jacob wrestled all night declaring,

“I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.”

GENESIS 32:26 (KJV)

Desperation has always been one of the distinguishing characteristics of great faith.

Pastor made a powerful observation that deserves careful reflection. Comfortable people often become uncomfortable with desperate worshippers. Those who no longer recognize their own need for God frequently struggle to understand those who passionately seek Him.

The Pharisees criticized David's worship. Michal despised his dancing. Judas criticized Mary's extravagant offering. The disciples attempted to silence children who were crying after Jesus. Time and again, Scripture reveals that religious comfort often opposes genuine spiritual hunger.

Yet Jesus consistently welcomed those who approached Him with sincere desperation.

James writes,

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”

JAMES 4:8 (KJV)

God has never rejected a heart that earnestly seeks Him.

This truth should encourage every believer. We never need to apologize for passionately pursuing God. Whether through prayer, worship, repentance, or faithful obedience, we should never allow public opinion to determine the intensity of our devotion.

Our worship is not measured by the comfort level of the crowd. It is measured by the sincerity of our hearts before God.

Bartimaeus understood something the crowd did not. They had another opportunity tomorrow. He may not.

That realization transformed his cry from ordinary prayer into desperate faith.

Sometimes the greatest spiritual breakthrough begins when we stop worrying about who is watching and become fully consumed with reaching Jesus.

REFLECT

*Have you ever quieted your prayer, worship, or pursuit of God because of what others might think?
What would it look like to seek Him with holy desperation, regardless of who is watching?*

PART

HEARING PRODUCES REVELATION, NOT JUST INFORMATION

07 CLOAKED

One of the most remarkable moments in the story of Bartimaeus is not the miracle itself, but the words that came out of his mouth before the miracle ever happened. The crowd simply announced that “Jesus of Nazareth” was passing by. To everyone else, those words were merely information. They identified where Jesus had grown up and who was walking through Jericho. To them He was a teacher, perhaps a prophet, perhaps even a miracle worker, but nothing more. Yet Bartimaeus heard those exact same words and responded very differently. Instead of crying, “Jesus of Nazareth,” he cried, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” Although he could not see Jesus with his physical eyes, he recognized Him with spiritual eyes. His blindness had not prevented him from receiving revelation.

This teaches us an important principle about the Kingdom of God. Hearing God’s Word is not enough if it never becomes revelation in our hearts. Many people hear sermons every week, read Scripture daily, and memorize verses throughout their lives, yet the Word never changes them because it remains information instead of becoming revelation. Information can educate the mind, but only revelation transforms the heart. The Pharisees knew the Scriptures better than anyone in Israel, yet they failed to recognize the very Messiah those Scriptures were pointing toward. Meanwhile, a blind beggar sitting beside a dusty road recognized what many religious leaders completely missed. The difference was not intelligence. The difference was that one group merely heard facts, while the other received understanding from God.

Jesus revealed this same truth when He asked His disciples who they believed Him to be. Many opinions circulated among the people. Some believed He was Elijah. Others thought He was Jeremiah or one of the prophets returned. Then Peter spoke with confidence, saying, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus immediately explained that Peter had not arrived at this conclusion through human reasoning but because the Father had revealed it to him. Revelation is always the work of God. Human effort can produce knowledge, but only the Holy Spirit opens our understanding to truly see who Jesus is.

This is why our prayer should never be limited to asking God to teach us something new. We should ask Him to reveal Himself through His Word. Every passage of Scripture contains more than historical facts or doctrinal truths. It reveals the character, the heart, and the nature of God. When we approach the Bible with humility, the Holy Spirit begins opening truths that cannot be discovered through study alone. Suddenly familiar verses take on new meaning. Promises that once seemed distant become personal. Commands that once felt difficult become invitations to deeper fellowship with Christ. Revelation changes not only what we know, but how we live.

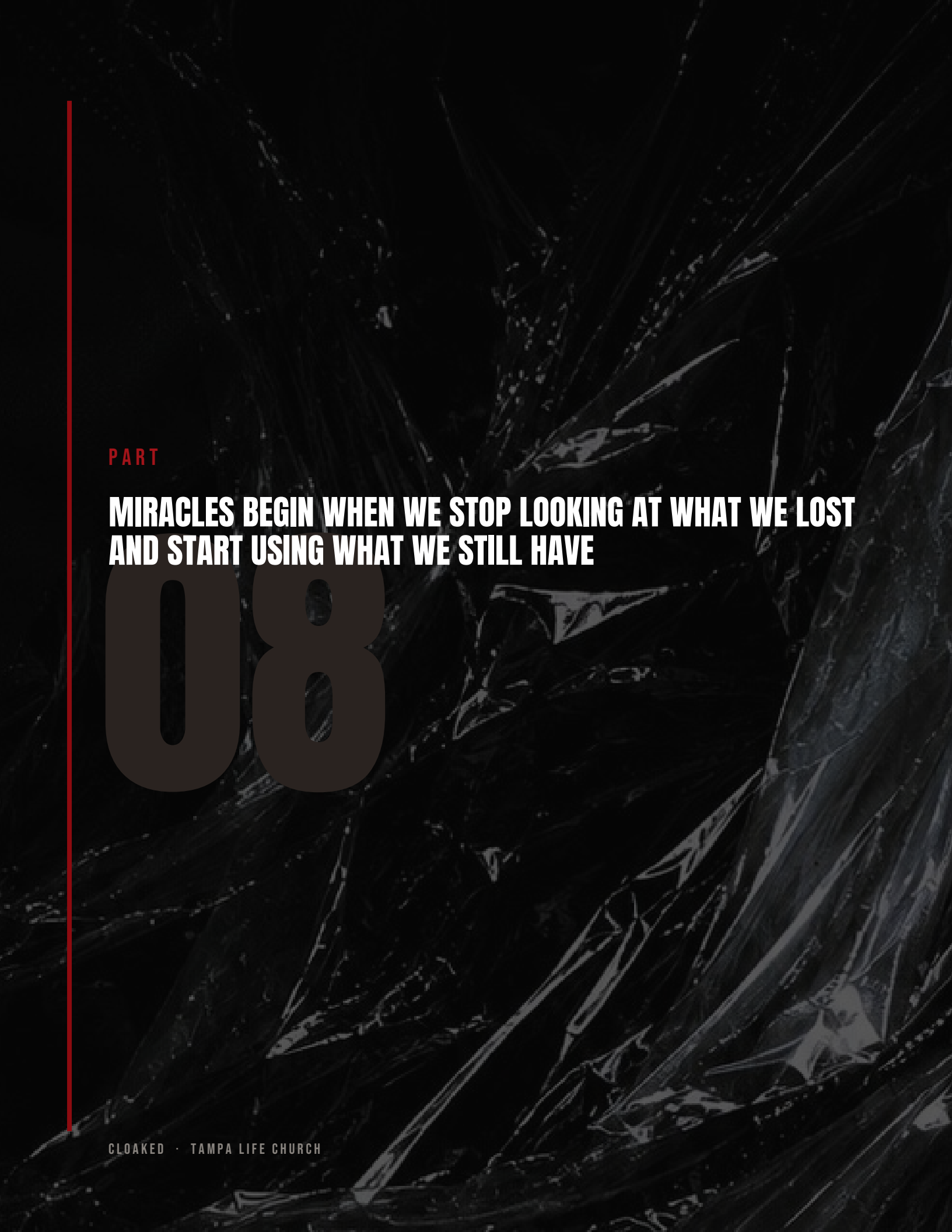
Bartimaeus demonstrates that physical sight is not the greatest kind of vision. A person may have perfect eyesight and still remain spiritually blind, while another may have every physical limitation imaginable and yet possess remarkable spiritual clarity. Throughout the Gospels this pattern appears repeatedly. Those who considered themselves spiritually educated often failed to recognize Jesus, while humble people with receptive hearts immediately discerned who He truly was. God has always been more interested in open hearts than educated minds.

This should encourage every believer. Spiritual maturity is not measured by how many verses we can quote or how many theological debates we can win. It is measured by how deeply God’s Word has transformed us. Every time we hear the preaching of Scripture, we have a choice. We can leave with

additional information, or we can allow the Holy Spirit to produce revelation that changes our lives forever. Bartimaeus received far more than a lesson that day. Because he heard with faith, information became revelation, revelation became worship, and worship positioned him for a miracle.

REFLECT

Are you reading and hearing God's Word for information, or asking Him for revelation? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one truth today, not just tell you one.



PART

**MIRACLES BEGIN WHEN WE STOP LOOKING AT WHAT WE LOST
AND START USING WHAT WE STILL HAVE**

08

Perhaps one of the most beautiful truths hidden within Bartimaeus' story is that his miracle did not begin when his eyesight returned. His miracle began when he stopped allowing what he had lost to determine what God could still do. Bartimaeus had every reason to focus on his blindness. It had shaped his entire life. It had limited where he could go, what he could do, and how society viewed him. His blindness had become his identity. Every day he wore the cloak that publicly identified him as a beggar, and every day he sat in the same place depending upon the mercy of strangers. Yet when Jesus passed by, Bartimaeus did not allow his greatest loss to silence the one ability he still possessed. He could still hear.

That single truth changed everything. He could not see Jesus, but he could hear that Jesus was near. He could not watch the miracles taking place around him, but he could hear the testimonies of what Jesus had already done. He could not observe the expressions on people's faces, but he could recognize hope in the announcement that Christ was passing by. The very thing he still possessed became the avenue through which God would completely change his life. Pastor made a profound statement that deserves to stay with us long after this lesson is over: "Miracles begin when you stop focusing on what you lost and begin focusing on what you still have." That is exactly how God has always worked.

Throughout Scripture, God consistently begins with what remains rather than what is missing. When Moses stood before the burning bush overwhelmed by his own inadequacies, God did not begin by discussing everything Moses lacked. Instead, He simply asked, "What is that in thine hand?" (Exodus 4:2). Moses saw an ordinary shepherd's rod. God saw the instrument through which seas would divide, rocks would bring forth water, and the authority of heaven would be demonstrated before an entire nation. The miracle did not begin with something Moses needed to acquire. It began with surrendering what he already possessed.

The same pattern appears in the ministry of Elisha. A widow approached the prophet burdened with overwhelming debt and convinced she had nothing left. Elisha asked her a simple question: "What hast thou in the house?" (2 Kings 4:2). Her first response revealed her perspective. "Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil." To her, the small vessel of oil was insignificant. To God, it was more than enough. That little pot became the starting point of supernatural provision because God specializes in multiplying what we place in His hands.

Jesus followed this same pattern during the feeding of the five thousand. The disciples focused on the size of the crowd and the impossibility of the situation. Jesus focused on five loaves and two fishes. The disciples counted what was lacking. Jesus blessed what remained. The miracle did not begin after they had enough. It began when they surrendered the little they already had.

How often do we make the same mistake? We become consumed by what has been taken from us. We focus on lost opportunities, broken relationships, declining health, financial struggles, disappointments, failures, or years we believe have been wasted. Gradually our attention becomes fixed on everything that is absent, and without realizing it we begin measuring God's future by our past losses. Yet Scripture repeatedly reminds us that God has never been limited by what His people lacked. He has always worked through what remained.

This truth is especially encouraging because every one of us carries areas of loss. Some have lost time. Others have lost confidence. Some have lost loved ones. Others have lost dreams they once believed would come to pass. Yet none of those losses prevent God from working if we are willing to place what remains into His hands. We may not have everything we once possessed, but if we still have His Word, we have truth. If we still have His Spirit, we have guidance. If we still have breath in our lungs, we still have purpose. As long as God has given us another day, He is not finished writing our story.

Jeremiah understood this after watching Jerusalem fall into complete devastation. Surrounded by destruction, he could have focused entirely on what had been lost. Instead, he chose to anchor his faith in what remained. He declared, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23). Even in the middle of unimaginable loss, Jeremiah found hope in the unchanging mercy of God.

That brings us back to Bartimaeus. His prayer reveals where true faith ultimately rests. He did not demand healing because he deserved it. He did not argue his qualifications. He did not attempt to bargain with Jesus. Instead, he cried, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” He understood that his future depended entirely upon the mercy of God. In reality, every miracle in Scripture rests upon that same foundation. We are not forgiven because we earned forgiveness. We are forgiven because God is merciful. We are not restored because of our own righteousness. We are restored because His grace is greater than our failures. Mercy is the bridge between our inability and God’s unlimited power.

Bartimaeus teaches us that God is not asking us to begin with what we have lost. He simply asks us to respond with what remains. One listening ear, one believing heart, one sincere cry for mercy, and one act of faith were enough to change the direction of his life forever. The same Jesus who honored that cry still responds to those who call upon Him today. The question is not whether God has enough power to perform another miracle. The question is whether we are willing to stop staring at what is gone and begin trusting Him with what He has graciously left in our hands.

REFLECT

What do you still have, gifts, time, faith, relationships, that you can place in God's hands today instead of focusing on what is missing?



CONCLUSION

WHAT ARE WE LISTENING TO?

The story of Bartimaeus is far more than the account of a blind man receiving his sight. It is the story of a man who allowed one voice to become greater than every other voice surrounding him. Before his eyes were ever opened, his ears were. Before he ever stood in the presence of Jesus, faith had already begun growing in his heart. Everything changed because he chose to believe what he heard instead of surrendering to what he felt.

This is the challenge every believer faces today. Every day we are surrounded by competing voices. Fear tells us nothing will ever change. Shame reminds us of yesterday's failures. Culture encourages compromise. The enemy whispers that we have missed our opportunity, that we are too broken, too weak, or too far gone for God to use us. Yet above all of those voices stands the voice of Jesus, still calling people to rise, still extending mercy, and still inviting us into a life of transformation.

Bartimaeus teaches us that faith begins with hearing, but it does not end there. Faith grows when we choose the right voices, surround ourselves with people who recognize God's work in our lives, refuse to be silenced by social pressure, respond when God creates a divine moment, and allow His Word to become revelation instead of mere information. Most importantly, faith flourishes when we stop measuring our future by what we have lost and begin trusting God with what remains.

Perhaps the greatest lesson in this passage is that the miracle began long before Bartimaeus ever opened his eyes. It began the moment he believed Jesus was passing by. His cry for mercy was evidence that hope had already replaced despair. His persistence proved that faith had become stronger than fear. His willingness to rise demonstrated that he no longer intended to remain identified by the place where life had left him.

The same invitation stands before us today. Jesus is still passing by lives that seem hopeless. He is still calling people who have grown comfortable sitting beside the road. He is still looking for men and women who will believe His Word before they see the evidence. Every time we gather around His Word, every time we hear His voice through preaching, every time the Holy Spirit stirs our hearts, we are standing in a Bartimaeus moment. Heaven is asking the same question: Will you believe what you hear enough to respond?

May we never become so accustomed to church that we miss our moment. May we never allow the crowd to determine the volume of our worship. May we never let yesterday's failures silence today's faith. Instead, may we become people who recognize when Jesus is near, who boldly call upon His name, who declare Him to be our King, and who humbly cry, "Have mercy on me."

For when faith hears the voice of God, miracles are no longer a possibility. They become an expectation.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

ROMANS 10:17 (KJV)

 REFLECT

*Whose voice have you been listening to most this season: fear, culture, disappointment, or God?
Write a short prayer committing to recognize His voice and respond when He calls.*
