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# The World We All Want – Provision

*Perceiving his greatness and receiving his provision*

**Mark 10:32-52**

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Seeing true greatness is what we were made for. To look upon the magnificence of God and not recoil but rejoice is ultimate joy. To become breathless by His beauty, to relish His righteousness, to be glad about His glory; this is what we were created to enjoy. <Review message #1>

But we noticed last week that sin says differently. Rejecting God's rule and wanting to rule we settle for substitutes (cf. Gen.3:1-7; Rom.1:23-25). Instead of His grandeur we exchange it for gadgets. Instead of His holiness we are content in human happiness. Instead of being dazzled by His greatness we are dazzled by our own. <Review message #2>

Today, in our third message of the series titled *The World We All Want*, we continue to trace the storyline of the Bible and notice God's provision for our rebellion. If last week addressed *why* the world we all want is not the world we all experience this week could be viewed as *how* the world we all experience changes to the world we all want (i.e. regeneration as depicted in Bartimaeus).

Last week we noticed that there is a curse over mankind due to rebellion. Sin is punished. And the punishment is death. Without God's provision for our rebellion we have no hope. We die in our sin. And we wake up in God's just anger forever. Today we will look at the gospel in its greatness. But in doing so we will be confronted with a most critical issue. What does it take to receive and become a beneficiary of God's provision found in Christ? The subtitle of the message hints at the answer; "perceiving His greatness and receiving His provision".

To perceive his greatness and receive his provision, open your Bibles to Mark 10 as we read and reflect upon v32-52.

## Perceiving His Greatness

The context for our passage this morning is shaped by the prophecy of the passion of Jesus Christ.

In v.32-34, we come across Jesus telling his disciples what must come to be. <Read v32-34>

According to Mark's gospel, this is the third and final time he will foretell of his death, burial and resurrection. One command is found in these verses. Applied to his disciples and applied to us this morning the imperative is found in v.33 – "See". That is the command. Jesus Christ frames the next two episodes with this one command. He tells those who follow him *to see* (that is; to behold, recognize, distinguish, identify carefully consider; interpret well what you are about to witness. We today will use the word "perceive").

What follows Christ's prophecy of His passion are two episodes to tell the story of two types of people. Each type we come across will have true greatness pass before their eyes. The question will be: WHEN do they perceive His greatness?

### Happens NOT when seen by eyes of the flesh (10:35-45)

The first group is the twelve disciples. These are his hand-picked disciples that have been with him now for over three years. As true greatness goes before them (32) and talks with them (33) what do we notice as readers? Picking up the story in v35 listen as I read v. 35-45.

What we notice in these verses is that *perceiving his greatness happens not when it is seen by eyes of the flesh*. Allow me to explain this by showing you an example of this.

## Evidenced by

This is evidenced by:

Selfish ambition with little thought of others

*James & John*

*v35-40*

James and John wanted to be made much of. In their self-adoring and Christ-ignoring disposition they asked Jesus to allow them to sit in the most prominent places at the Great Marriage Banquet at the end of the ages (see Rev.19:6-10). They understood Christ to be the long awaited Lord who would go to Jerusalem to restore the glory of the fallen throne of David. But their question betrays the notion that he would go into Jerusalem and fulfill messianic prophecy without suffering. Though the sufferings are profoundly different from each other, both Christ and His followers must endure suffering before they enjoy glory. This is made clear in the two symbols in this paragraph; the cup (representing judgment [14:24]) and baptism (meaning to be immersed in suffering [Lk.12:50]).

Their question of rank involved selfish ambition with little thought of others.

*The Ten*

*v41-45*

When The Ten overheard what James and John were vying for, they were up in arms. Rivalry and jealousy break onto the scene. Out of their hearts came all sorts of contentions for greatness; a greatness measured not by the gospel standards but by human/fleshly standards (seen plainly in how Jesus views them; v.42-44). Jesus rebukes their views by summarizing His identity and mission. This is found in v.45 (Quote this key verse of the entire book).

Both James and John and the Ten demonstrate that *perceiving his greatness happens not when it is seen by eyes of the flesh.*

## Perceiving His Greatness

The second group we come in contact with is represented by one person. The setting is eighteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. Just south of the old city of Jericho (the great city that came crashing down) we find the first century Jericho. This city was built by Herod as the site for his magnificent winter palace. Its greatness was known throughout the region for its beauty and amazing structural design.

### Happens when seen by eyes of faith (10:46-52)

With that as a backdrop we find a person named Bartimaeus. He is a nobody with no money. He is not important. He is not a go-to man. He is a blind beggar. What does Mark (writer of this Gospel) want his readers to conclude as they read v.46-52? (read vv.)

## Evidenced by

I love this paragraph in the Bible! This scene embodies the truth that *perceiving his greatness happens when seen by the eyes of faith.* This is made clear by noticing Bartimaeus.

**Crying out to Christ for mercy and sight**

**v46-48**

First we notice him crying out to Christ for mercy and sight. The Bible says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. Bartimaeus undoubtedly heard about Jesus of Nazareth. His relentless crying of "Son of David" reflects his conviction that he believed that Jesus was the Messiah (cf. Isa.11:1ff; Jer.23:5f; Eze.34:23f).

His request to see (in v51) also reflects his conviction that Jesus is the Christ who fulfills Isa.35:4-6 (see also Isa. 61:1) which says, *Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.*

The crowd cannot see true greatness for they are rebuking him to silence him. But unstopped, Bartimaeus must hear Jesus call for him. And for him Christ calls.

### Coming to Christ expectantly for mercy and sight

v49-51

Notice how Bartimaeus came when he heard Jesus call for him. “throwing off his cloak” and “sprang up” are descriptions of a man who has confident and joyous trust in Christ. It’s as though he recalls the words of Isaiah 29:18-19 which says:

*“In that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see. The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel”*

### Carrying on with Christ by following Him on the way

The last bit of evidence for the reader to conclude that Bartimaeus truly perceives Christ’s greatness is in his actions that come as a result of his sight. He is found in v.46 as one who was “sitting by the way”. After his sight is restored we notice him following Christ on the way. Eyes opened to glory will motivate the legs to walk the way; a way leading to glory that passes through suffering and sacrifice.

The healing of Bartimaeus displays the identity of Jesus as the long awaited Messiah. It also communicates that perceiving his greatness leads to receiving his provision.

Crying out, coming to and carrying on with the Christ arises when *perceiving his greatness happens by the eyes of faith.*

[NOTE: The Gospel of Mark continues this theme as noticed in the unveiling of Jesus’ greatness in 11:1-11. The clues of His greatness are everywhere. V.1 talks about the Mount of Olives (an allusion to Zech.14 and the great coming of the Messiah). V.1-6 have multiple descriptions that point the reader to Gen.49:8-12; Zech.9:9; all of which reveal the true significance of Jesus’ greatness. V.8 describes the way a king would be welcomed as noted in 2Kings 9:11ff. V.10 quotes Ps.118:26 as a celebration of the coming King. Nine verses are thickened with allusions from the O.T. to make clear that the Messiah is near.

The clear point should be clear by now. True greatness is on center stage. Does the nation of Israel see it? V.10 is a commentary on v.9. Their understanding of Ps.118 is that it’s accurate but it’s not current. The prophecies of Ps.118 according to the crowd are not fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Otherwise why would they conclude by saying “Hosanna IN THE HIGHEST? In other words, “Save us, oh you who dwell in the highest”. Jesus, who is right under their nose, is unnoticed. Do they see his greatness? Look at his fan fare in v.11. The passage shifts from being loud and many to lonely and few. The point is plain. Jesus’ greatness was not perceived by the nation of Israel. And as a result His provision was not received. Clear sight of the Christ comes clearly by the Christ = faith is a gift].

### ***Concluding by closing in on Mark 10:45***

As we prepare to leave this morning let’s conclude by closing in on Mark 10:45.

In Mark 10:45 the violent death of Jesus is presented as his service to God and as a substitute death for many. Each of the components seen in this verse will function for us this morning as a guide to guide you to God’s provision for you sin.

The first component of this verse makes clear the mission of Jesus Christ.

***The Son of Man came...*** The whole need of a substitute to die on our behalf is made plain by noticing the disciples’ selfishness, jealousy and anger. It is as though we are looking in a mirror. V.35-45 is the material from which God fashioned the church.

Mark in his gospel introduced Christ's mission in 2:17 by saying "*Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners*".

Does this make sense to you? Are you viewing yourself as a sinner in need of the Savior? Confessing that you have selfish ambition with little thought of others, do you see God's provision for your sin? Can you sense the reason behind Christ's mission? If so, then God is at work in your life.

- ***Not to be served...*** As we make our way through this all-important summary verse we come to the next piece – "not to be served". This piece highlights why he came into this world by saying why he did not come. The phrase "not to be served" is essential to our understanding of the greatness of Christ. It was not as though Christ had needs to meet through his creation that he came. He did not need to be served. He needs nothing because He is everything. There are no deficiencies in Christ that would cause Him to come to earth. He is the giver. He is not the receiver. He, also, came freely. There is no compulsion or pressure on Him to come and die. He freely gave His life for His people who perceive His greatness and receive His provision. This phrase "not to be served" shows his matchless essence. What a glorious God He is!
- ***To serve...*** The next phrase to the summary verse is "to serve". His life was focused on serving people. All through the Gospels you will find him other-centered and selflessly giving. But much more than this, we see that his life was ultimately a sacrificial service to his Father. What Christ served up to His father was himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of many. His love with joy serves the undeserving by giving him and her the best gift of God's love. And the best gift of God's love can be seen in the next piece of this verse.
- ***To give His life a ransom...*** Christ offered Himself up to God as a ransom in full for our obligation. Due to this payment we are freed from the cruelty of sin, Satan and the awful and final consequence of rebellion. The ultimate captivity however from which we need release is the final judgment of God (Rom.2:2; Rev. 14:7ff). Listen to how John saw it in Revelation 14: *Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come...the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and [unbelievers] will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night..*

This ransom paid in full liberates us from the tyranny of the second death that lets nobody escape. This ransom paid in full by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus provides full and forever happiness for His people as they now are reconciled to God. This ransom was not just how he lived his life. This ransom was the free giving of his life in death. He freely offered his life as an offering to his Father on behalf of the sins of many. We are now ready to hear who the recipients are of this astounding gift. Notice carefully the last phrase of this verse as it clarifies for whom Christ died.

- ***For many...*** Not everyone will be ransomed from the wrath of God. The Bible says, "*worthy are you our Lord and God to receive glory and honor and power...for you were slain and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation* (Rev.4:11,5:9). And yet, without exception everyone will be ransomed from the wrath of God who by faith are perceiving His greatness and receiving His provision.

Be a Bartimaeus. Perceiving His greatness as a means of receiving His provision...be a Bartimaeus! Cry out to Christ for mercy and sight. Come to Christ for mercy and life. And carrying on with Christ for the glory due His name. Let's pray.