

The Question of Desperation

Matthew 20:29-34

MPS Jesus is worthy of our faith because He shows God's compassion to all who are desperate for Him, and mercy to all who call on Him.

OBJ Every person should call on Jesus in faith because of Three presentations Matthew provides to reveal God.

READ Matthew 20:29-34

*And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. ³⁰And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³¹The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³²And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³³They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." ³⁴And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him. **Matthew 20:29-34***

Jesus and his disciples are still on their way to Jerusalem, and they are getting very close. Jericho is only fifteen miles Northeast of Jerusalem. Citing this geographical location, Matthew heightens the tension of the journey by the activity and chaos of the crowd, as they draw closer to the holy city. Matthew notes that a great crowd followed Jesus. What was once crowds of people all around has now simply merged into one large crowd. The closer you get to the destination, the more congested the traffic becomes and the higher the heart rate rises. The electricity in the air grows thick as everyone heading into Jerusalem anticipates the festival. But as we mentioned, Jesus was focused on the Father's mission. And that meant He was always looking and listening for people.

Crowds bring noise, which creates a lot of distraction. As with the popularity of Jesus, the more that people recognized him, and as word got out about where He was, the congestion, noise, and chaos rose around Him. People wanted to be close to Jesus everywhere He went. Not always for the right reasons, but close to Him none-the-less. Everyone clamored for His attention. **And in the chaos, some of the people who needed Him most could not get close because of the crowd.** This is the situation here.

Two blind men were sitting alongside the road. They heard the commotion, realized who was coming and began to cry out. The crowds rebuked them, telling them to be quiet and leave Him alone, but desperation intensified their cries. Desperation has a way of ignoring societal norms. These men were not able to simply go find Jesus any time they chose. He was passing by them. This was their one chance to request the one thing they could never find in this world. **Rebukes from the crowd were not going to silence blind cries of desperation.**

Jesus heard their cry for mercy. Above the roar of the crowd, the excitement of onlookers, and even the applause of those impressed with what He had done, Jesus heard the cry of the men over there, away by the side of the road. Those men not exactly facing the right direction because they were unsure exactly where He was in the crowd. Jesus heard their cry. As Matthew records, the men were unencumbered to make sure Jesus heard their cries. And when He heard them, He stopped, called out to them, and asked, **"What do you want me to do for you?"**

What a powerful question; "What do you want me to do for you?" This question is encouraging no matter who it comes from. But here the One asking is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Creator of all things and Author of life. The One who before the foundation of the world was set in place, before the mountains were brought forth, or the earth and world were formed, from everlasting to everlasting (Psalm 90:2), He IS, the One who is eternal God stopped and asked a question of the two men the crowd tried to shame into silence. Jesus heard their cry of faith and had compassion on them. Jesus is a magnet for those who are desperate in need, and when the world is pushing away, Jesus is drawing near. Jesus is a balm for those who are wounded and hurting, in desperate need of healing. (Jeremiah 8:22) **Jesus looked past the sea of people who were enamored with Him but would not call out to Him, and He went straight to the two men who couldn't get to Him, but cried out in desperation for Him.**



Do you see this **picture** of Jesus that Matthew paints for us here?

Jesus is worthy of your faith;

He shows God's compassion to all who are desperate for Him, and mercy to all who call on Him.

OBJ Jesus' response reveals God's heart of compassion that compel all to call out to Him. ¹Jesus loves you. Love is why He was walking through the crowd into Jerusalem. Jesus cares about people who are hurting, people that the crowd has sidelined as unimportant and tried to silence. ²Jesus hears you. He is listening and hears your cry for help, and He wants to meet your need. ³Jesus comes to invite you. He invites your faith to show you God's mercy in your desperation.

TRANS I want you to notice how these two men responded to Jesus' question.

Men who sat in the world's oblivion were the center of God's attention. These men were desperate, and that motivated their request. The urgency of your request is always propelled by the weight of your desperation. If you don't feel it, you won't act on it. But when you know it, you are ready to confess it, and you refuse to let others stand in the way of it. The weight of desperation may dampen your strength to do anything about your need, but it sharpens the senses to sources that can help. So, when Jesus came over and asked His question, "**What do you want me to do for you?**", it MUST have shocked these men, and maybe even momentarily paralyzed them in dismay. No one had responded to their cries before, except to rebuke them to be silent. Now, the Lord of all is asking them "**What do you want me to do for you?**"

Do you feel this moment in the text? Maybe you have felt this moment in your life. When the weight and the cry of your desperation gets a response! In this instant, your lifetime of hopelessness eases, and your situation of helplessness vanishes in one question. Instead of the crowd shouting, "Shut up!", one person says, "speak up." This is the moment these men had waited their whole life for! This is the moment these men could possibly stop sitting by the side of the road, no longer confined to their darkness, only hoping others would be available to lead them, and they could start walking with everyone else, all the way in to worship in Jerusalem. This is not only the moment for these two men. This truly IS *THE* moment all who are broken and in need of healing, wounded and hurting, confused and in need of direction, wait for! NOW someone has heard me. NOW someone has come to me. NOW someone has asked how they can help me. And this someone is not just anyone, but He is THE ONE who can change everything. And HE wants to know, "**What do you want me to do for you?**"

And to Jesus' question the blind men reply, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." They didn't ask for everything the world could offer; for riches, for fame, for comfort, for pleasure, or for anything else the world promises. They made a simple ask for Jesus to meet their great need. **What would Jesus do in this moment? How would He respond? Did He have one more miracle in Him? Did He care about their great need?** The questions one could ask are endless, but we don't have to wonder. Jesus takes pity on them, touches their eyes, and immediately their sight is recovered.

Do you see the **person** of Jesus that Matthew introduces to us here?

Jesus is worthy of your faith;

He shows God's compassion to all who are desperate for Him, and mercy to all who call on Him.

OBJ Jesus response reveals God's heart of compassion and compels all to call out to Him. ¹Jesus loves you. Love is why Jesus was walking through the crowd into Jerusalem. Jesus cares about people who are hurting, people that the crowd has sidelined as unimportant and tried to silence. ²Jesus hears you. He is listening and hears your cry for help, and He wants to meet your need. ³Jesus comes to invite you. He invites your faith to show you God's mercy in your desperation.

Friend, wherever you are today, Jesus hears you. IF you feel your need for Jesus today more than ever before; if you are overwhelmed by your weight of burden that is making shallow your breathing, constricting your heartbeat, and crushing your spirit, Jesus has compassion and mercy for you today. Do not be silenced by any rebuke of the crowd. Do not let this world shame your brokenness or desperation into silence. Do not let the appearance of someone else's profile that makes them appear as if they have life 'all together' cause you to shrink into silent defeat. Jesus is passing by today. He is real, and He is here. You feel your want and need for Him! Your heart, mind, and soul are crying out for help. He wants to know,



“What do you need Him to do for you today?” Call on Him. He WILL hear you!

I am not speaking to the many who have it all together today. I am speaking to the one, two, or maybe only a few who came today silently hoping to see God. And I came today to tell you that God wants you to do more than only see Him. He knows you and sees you, and He came to meet with you today. Do not bury your hope in silence any more. You don't have to hold it all together any longer. He is here! Call out to Him today, louder until you know He has heard you. He is here! Jesus in compassion is asking a question to answer your desperation with His mercy and power, “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus walks among the whole crowd today, but He hears, stops, and responds in compassion to those who cry out to Him in desperation.

TRANS Now, one last presentation of Jesus I want you to see here.

The men's response is immediate, as it should be; they respond in faith and follow Jesus. How else do you respond to this moment? How could one possibly look on and see what Jesus did, and NOT believe?

I assure you of this. These two men were NOT the only people in the crowd who wanted something from Jesus that day. But they were the two who were desperate enough to make sure they reached Him and got His attention. Many follow along in the crowd, and some for a long way or a long time, but never ask for anything. Some here today don't feel desperate, but only because your desperation is covered by numbness toward God. Maybe you think God has more important matters to stop for. Maybe you've asked before and felt as though God did not hear or did not answer. Maybe you are unsure if God can really make any difference in your life today. Or maybe, you are unsure if Jesus is worthy of your faith to follow Him.

TRANS Matthew answers all these for us as well.

Do you see God's power in the Lord Jesus, whom Matthew invites all to follow here?

Jesus is worthy of your faith;

He shows God's compassion to all who are desperate for Him, and mercy to all who call on Him.

OBJ Jesus response reveals God's heart of compassion and compels all to call out to Him. ¹Jesus loves you. Love is why Jesus was walking through the crowd into Jerusalem. Jesus cares about people who are hurting, people that the crowd has sidelined as unimportant and tried to silence. ²Jesus hears you. He is listening and hears your cry for help, and He wants to meet your need. ³Jesus comes to invite you. He invites your faith to show you God's mercy in your desperation.

CLOSE Jesus is still focused on the Father's mission of saving and redeeming people. He may not answer your request in the exact way you perceived. But His answer WILL BE far greater than you dared imagine! What is your answer to Jesus today?

Jesus is the Lord of all who has come to do for you today what you have not done for yourself, and what you will not do for yourself, and what you cannot do for yourself. What is your answer to Jesus today?

You don't have to see where Jesus will come from nor how He could or will work in your life. All you have to do is cry out for help, and He is ready to show compassion and mercy on you. What is your answer to Jesus today?

Jesus is worthy of your faith;

He shows God's compassion to all who are desperate for Him, and mercy to all who call on Him.

