

# The Healing of Bartimaeus.

## Characters:

Narrator

People: P1, P2, P3.

Bartimaeus.

Jesus.

Narr: Once upon a time there was a man called Bartimaeus who lived in a town called Jericho. Bartimaeus was blind, and in those days that meant that he couldn't work to earn a living. So every day he sat by the road side on one of Jericho's busiest streets and begged. He would ask passers by for money to buy his food.

He would say:

Bart: (holding out his hand and looking around)

Spare a copper Guv', give us something for a bite to eat! Have you got a few pence for a cup of tea?

Narr: Some people in Jericho were generous and gave Bartimaeus a few coins to keep him going.

They would say:

P1: "Here you are Bart, have a drink on me!"

Narr: Others were not so kind, they didn't like Bartimaeus at all, they thought that he made their neat little town look untidy, they just wished that he would go away.

They would shout things like:

P2: clear off you silly old fool,

P3: Get out of my way you smelly old beggar.

Narr: Even the children would be nasty to Bartimaeus by teasing him, or tapping him on the shoulder and running away before he could reach out to stop them.

*(P2 & P3 act out tapping on shoulder and running away)*

Narr: Bartimaeus felt very lonely and very sad. He didn't really have any friends, and it often seemed to him that no one wanted to help him.

One day Bartimaeus was sitting by the roadside when things started to get unusually noisy. People were gathering by the roadside talking in excited voices.

They seemed to be waiting for something or someone.

P1,2,3: (Stand behind Bart and chatter excitedly saying the word "Jesus" several times.

Narr: Bartimaeus listened to their excited chatter, and he heard the name Jesus being mentioned. He'd heard of a man called Jesus from a town called Nazareth. He'd heard of him because people said he was kind, and said marvellous things about God, and because he had been told that Jesus could heal people. He could make deaf people hear, and lame people walk, and most importantly for Bartimaeus, he could even bring light to the eyes of blind people and make them see!

Bartimaeus was surrounded by people now, and the noise was getting louder.

Bartimaeus desperately wanted to meet this Jesus, but how could he, he was so small in this big crowd!? He decided that all he could do was shout, so he opened his mouth and bellowed as loudly as he could.

Bart: Jesus, stop, have mercy on me! Jesus, stop, have mercy on me!

Narr: But the people in the crowd around him got very annoyed.

P2: Shut up, Shut up,

P3: Jesus won't want to meet someone as dirty and smelly as you, so shut up you old fool!

Narr: But Bartimaeus knew that this was probably the only chance he would ever have of meeting Jesus, so he ignored the crowd and shouted all the louder.

Bart: Jesus, stop, have mercy on me! Jesus, stop, have mercy on me!!

Narr: Some people in the crowd closed in around Bartimaeus, they kicked him and pushed him and tried to drag him away. But still he shouted as loudly as he could.

Bart: Jesus, stop, have mercy on me! Jesus, stop, have mercy on me!!

(Enter Jesus)

Narr: Suddenly the crowd all around Bartimaeus went very quiet, and Bartimaeus heard a voice, not the scolding voice of the crowd, but a kind and gentle voice, a voice that, when you heard it, made you feel safe, and ... and ... and something else that Bartimaeus couldn't think of any words for.

Jesus: Who's that calling out to me?

Narr: asked the voice, there were various murmurings from the people in the crowd,

P2,3: (embarrassed murmurings Like:  
I didn't hear anything, did you? and:  
No, not a thing, unless you mean that old donkey back there.

Narr: and then the voice said:

Jesus: bring him hear,

Narr: Suddenly a voice from behind Bartimaeus said:

P1: Cheer up old boy, he's calling you!

(Bartimaeus get to feet and feel a few steps forward)

Narr: Immediately Bartimaeus jumped up on his feet, he left his cloak and begging bowl and the few spare rags he had on the ground and slowly began edging his way forward through the crowd. Suddenly he heard the voice again:

Jesus: What do you want me to do for you?

Narr: Again Bartimaeus was filled with that feeling that he couldn't describe, he paused for a moment, hardly daring to ask, but then he blurted out his request.

Bart: Teacher, I, I, I, want to see!

Narr: Bartimaeus stood trembling for what seemed like a long long time, everyone was completely silent around him, and Bartimaeus could just feel that everyone's eyes were fixed on him and Jesus. Suddenly Bartimaeus felt a touch, a very gentle touch on his face A hand touched one eye, and then the other, and the Voice said:

Jesus: Son, receive your sight.

Narr: Bartimaeus stood there for a moment, his eyes tightly shut, hardly daring to open them, but slowly he began to flicker his eye lids open. And, and ... and for a moment he thought his head was going to explode, the colours, the shapes, the movement, everything was just too much to take in. But then, in the middle of it all, his eyes met with another pair of eyes. Bartimaeus was staring into a face, and immediately he knew what that feeling was that he couldn't put into words before. For the first time for a long long long time, Bartimaeus knew that he was loved. In that face, the face of Jesus, Bartimaeus knew that someone loved him. It wasn't pity or sympathy, Bartimaeus knew what that was like, but this was love. Jesus held out his hand and Bartimaeus took it, and together the beggar and the King walked out of the city and off in the direction of Jerusalem.

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