

Jesus Opens the Eyes of the Heart

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[0 : 00] I've got a Bible with you? Hopefully you do, even if it is an electronic one. Open to Luke chapter 18.

Verses 31 to 43. Luke 18, starting with verse 31, and all the way to the end of the chapter. So listen as I read our text for this morning. Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem.

All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For he will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon.

They will scourge him and kill him. And the third day he will rise again. But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them.

[1 : 14] They did not know the things which were spoken. And it happened as he was coming near Jericho that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant.

So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, and he cried out, saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet, but he cried out all the more, Son of David, have mercy on me.

So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he had come near, he asked him, saying, What do you want me to do for you?

He said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said to him, Receive your sight. Your faith has made you well. Immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God.

And all the people who saw it gave praise to God. All right, so interesting text. And maybe at first glance, you might be tempted to think, well, how does all that go together?

[2 : 28] Seems like we have two different things happening here that are unrelated, but really not. And so I think the best way for me to introduce our study of this passage is to maybe show you how it all fits together.

And it's really quite simple when you think about it. The three kind of movements in the passage. And they come together.

First of all, we have Jesus giving revelation. Kind of prophecy, in a sense. Revelation about the future. The near future.

His future. Very near future, actually, at this point in his ministry. And so he says to his disciples, here's what's going to happen. You know that we are gradually making our way to Jerusalem.

And when we get there, here's what's going to happen. I'm going to die. I'm going to die. But he also said, I'm going to be raised from the dead. All right. So that's the first part of the story.

[3 : 33] And amazingly, Jesus' disciples don't understand what he's talking about. I mean, do you have that kind of feeling when you're reading it or hearing it read?

You know, this is amazing. Doesn't make any sense. I mean, how can this be? Matter of fact, Jesus did not speak in a parable, did he? As he often did. And in this case, Jesus is not using any kind of complicated or complex analogy.

Jesus was known to do that from time to time. And also, Jesus did not use any figurative language here. Nothing symbolic.

He could not have put it more clear. Really. I mean, it seems that way, doesn't it? And yet, the disciples are completely unable to see it.

Right? So what comes next? The story about a blind man. You get it? I mean, the disciples have eyes, but they can't see.

[4 : 38] This poor beggar is blind, but he can't see. He can see. And really, the question is, how was he able to see what the disciples were unable to see?

Could not see. Would not see. And maybe the more significant question is, how can anyone see? That really ought to be the question we ask and answer. How can anyone see, any person see the truth, the real truth, the most significant truth about Jesus Christ? Have you ever grappled with that question? I mean, in kind of a personal context? You know, say you have someone, a good friend, a good family member, a close family member, a father, mother, brother, sister, whatever. And you have shared with them, to the best of your ability, as plainly as you can, the truth of Jesus Christ, the gospel. And it is as if it just kind of goes over the head. [5 : 42] You know, they can't see it. They don't get it. They don't understand it. It doesn't make any sense to them. And we're thinking, why? It's so simple to me. When it is so plain to see, at least for me.

You ever grappled with that, wondered about that? Well, I think we can find an answer to that perplexing question. Troubling, frustrating kind of experience. And we can find that, I think, right here in this text. We put all these three things together, these three kind of movements in the story. And so, let's begin with the first part of the story. And so, the first thing I want you to see, consider, is the Savior revealed. That's number one. The Savior revealed. Jesus revealed to, not his disciples in general, but he had quite a number of those. Not all of them were believers in him. Not true believers. They were followers. And they sometimes, in a very generic kind of broad way, were referred to in Scripture as disciples. [6 : 56] But he's not talking about the disciples at large, but specifically the twelve. So, he took them aside. And to his twelve, Jesus revealed why he had come.

The purpose for which he came into the world. He revealed that to them. Jesus revealed himself as the Savior. And you say, well, so?

I mean, didn't they already know that? Well, no, they didn't. Not in the sense that they should have understood it. Certainly, they thought of him as a Savior, but not in the same sense or context. A Savior from sin. They didn't know him that way. Jesus, as yet, was not their Savior in that way. Even though we might argue that by now they should have been able to see that. That he was the Savior. And so, Jesus is revealing that to them. And by the way, this is not the first time Jesus told them about his mission as Savior.

[8 : 08] As Savior. Not the first time. In fact, in Luke, this is the third time. The first time, first and second time, come back in chapter 9. We studied that months ago.

Not sure how far back we have to go. But in chapter 9, verse 22. And then also in verse 44. Jesus reveals this about himself. That he has come as the Savior.

Sacrificial Savior. So, this is the third time. But they did not see him. They were not looking for him. In that way.

In fact, their theology. Specifically, the theology concerning the Messiah. And beyond that, their theology in terms of eschatology.

He did not include that. I know it's difficult for us to imagine that. You know, because what we know. And where we are. And point of history.

[9 : 07] We know these things. So, it's difficult to imagine that they would not have known these things. That Jesus revealing to them his purpose to save.

To be a sacrificial Savior. Was something that they didn't get. That they didn't understand. So, Jesus reveals his saving ministry to his disciples.

And there are really four things to know about. That we can kind of glean from this passage. And they're really very interesting. Verse 31. Tells us.

Begins to tell us. The certainty. Of his saving ministry. The certainty of it. Because Jesus begins in verse 31.

With the word behold. That means you better listen. Actually, the word. *Edu* in the Greek. It means to see. To see. And it's in the form of an imperative.

[10 : 03] So, Jesus is commanding them. To open their eyes. And see. Something extremely important. And then from there. He says in verse 31. We are.

Going to Jerusalem. Now, emphasizing certain words in the passage. So, that you can understand. That the point here. Is the certainty of all of this. We are. Going up to Jerusalem.

We're going there. And then in verse 31. He also says. All things that are written by the prophets. Concerning the Son of Man. That's just simply a term that refers to the Messiah.

Come from Daniel. All things the prophets have written. For us. That would be everything in the Old Testament. All those things the prophets have written. Concerning the Son of Man.

What? Will. Will be accomplished. Will you see the certainty of. And verse 32. He. Will. Be.

[10:58] Delivered to the Gentiles. And verse 32. He. Will. Be. It's almost redundant. He. Will. Be. Mocked. And insulted. And spit upon.

And verse 33. They. Will. Scourge him. And. Kill him. And. Then. The. Crème de la crème. Verse 33.

And the third day. He. Will. Rise. Again. That's the part we like. It. The point I'm making is. This is very deliberate language. And we ought to.

Pay attention to that. As we read. Through. The passage. And Jesus. Is. Presenting. To his disciples. The certainty. Of all of this. And now the reason why.

This is somewhat lost on. Or wasted on us. Is because. For us. All of this has already happened.

This is not. News to us. We're living on this side of it. But.

[11:53] For the disciples. These things had not yet happened. And. And what's more. They were not even looking for it. And. Even more than that. It had not even. Occurred.

Or entered. Their secret. Thoughts. That such a thing. Would ever. Ever. Happen to Jesus. And so. They were completely. Taken by surprise.

And listen. The certainty. That Christ. Will accomplish. His saving. Work. Rest primarily. With the Old Testament. Prophecy. That Jesus. Mentioned. Or his reference to it.

Again. He said. All. How many of them? All of them. All things. That are written. By the prophets. Concerning the Son of Man.

Concerning me. Jesus is saying. Will. Be. Accomplished. The certainty. Of it. And reminds me. Of Amos. Chapter 3. In verse 7. Where. The prophet said.

[12:48] Surely. The Lord God. Does nothing. Unless he reveals. His secret counsel. To his servants. The prophets. And he did that. Did he? Now. I also remind you.

That some of those. Secret counsels. That he revealed. To the prophets. Have not yet. Been accomplished. Not because they fail. But because it's still. Future for it. But they will be. They will be.

Accomplished. All things written. By the prophets. Concerning the Son of Man. Will be.

Accomplished. The certainty. Of it. The certainty. Of his saving ministry. Second.

The necessity. Not only is it certain. But it's. Necessary. Absolutely. Crucial. Absolutely. Necessary. And the wording here.

Is also. Very. Deliberate. There in verse 30. 32. Look at it. Jesus says. Speaking of himself. Again. For he. That is.

[13:43] Me. Jesus is saying. Jesus. Messiah. The Son of Man. He. Will. Be. What? Delivered. To the Gentiles. And that is a very.

Deliberate. Choice of words. Delivered. Now. From this passage. And other passages. We. Know. To whom Jesus. Was delivered. Right.

The Gentiles. Specifically. The Romans. To carry out. The crucifixions. All right. So we know that. But. The question is.

Who. Delivered. Jesus. To the Gentiles. Who did. To be mocked. And. Insult. And. Spit upon.

And. Scourged. And. Eventually. Killed. Who did that? Who handed him over. To this. And.

[14:39] Why? Well. I'm sure you know. But I want you to turn to Romans chapter 8. Verse 28. And. See. The. Delivered.

Answered. Verse 8. 28. Of course. Very familiar passage. Most of us could quote it by heart. And we know. Paul said. In Romans 8. 28. We know.

That all things work together. For good. To those who love God. To those who are. The called.

According to his purpose. Everybody knows that passage. And.

Believers. Know it. And believe it. Right. Absolutely. And. Why should we believe it? Verse 29. For whom he foreknew.

He also predestined. To be conformed. To the image of his son. That he might be the first born. Among many brethren. Sisters too. But. And hopefully that's all of us.

[15:33] I really hope that. But let's look further. Verse 30. Moreover. Whom he predestined. These he also called. Whom he called. These he also justified.

That is. Made right with him. And. Whom he justified. These he also glorified. That is. Future. Still. But. In the mind of God.

It's a done deal. God has done all of these things. Marvelous. Wonderful. I mean. That's what God has done. For all. Believers. Every believer. In Christ Jesus. And so.

We say. Verse 31. If God is for us. Who can be against us. Right? Amen. Amen. Here's the question. What had to happen.

To make all of that possible. What had to happen. All that. That we just read. All of that. That God has done.

[16:30] For us. What had to happen. In order. For that to be possible. See. Listen. By divine. Necessity. Something.

Had to be done. Before God. Could do. All of these things. For us. Something had to be done.

Verse 32. He did not spare. His own son.

Now watch this. But he. Delivered him up. Delivered him up.

For us. That's how he can. Then freely give us all things. He delivered. Him up. For us all. See. You see. God delivered him up.

Same word. Used by Jesus. Here in Luke. 18:32. It is the. Greek word. Paradiami. And it means. To give. Into the hands. Of another.

[17:25] It means. To give. Over. Into. Another's. Power. And so. Here in Luke. 18. And verse 32. Jesus is giving.

A veiled. Kind of. Albeit. Veiled. A declaration. Of the necessity. Of the death. Of Jesus Christ. The necessity. Of it. In Matthew. Chapter 16. Verse 21.

We have Jesus. Telling the disciples. Basically. Some of the same things. That he's telling them. Here in Luke 18. Recorded Luke 18. And in Matthew. It says. From that time. Jesus began. To show his disciples.

That he. Must. Go. To Jerusalem. See the necessity of it. He must go. And suffer many things. From the elders. And chief priests. And scribes.

And be killed. And be raised. The third day. That's what he told his disciples. There in Matthew. 16. And then. Peter. Bless his heart. Remember.

[18:19] He kind of pulls Jesus aside. He says. God forbid. Lord. God forbid. This shall never happen to you. You just got to love Peter.

Remember what Jesus said to him? Get thee behind me. Peter. No. Not Peter. Satan. Get thee. Get behind me Satan. For you are an offense to me.

Wow. And why? He said. You. For you. Are not mindful. You're not thinking of the things of God. The purposes of God.

Through me. See. The necessity. They're clear. And then of course. We cannot help but notice. The severity. The severity of it.

And it's going to. You know. Not going to be a cake walk for Jesus. And it was not a cake walk for him. Jesus said he will be. Mocked. And insulted. And spit upon.

[19:23] And. Indeed he was. Was it? Matthew chapter 27. Verse 27. After Pilate. Was through with him. And he turned him over. To the guards.

Then. The Bible says. Then the soldiers of the governor. Took Jesus into the praetorium. And gathered the whole garrison around him. And they stripped him.

And put a scarlet robe on him. And when they had twisted a crown of thorns. They put it on his head. And a reed in his right hand. And they bowed the knee before him.

And mocked him. Saying. Hail. King of the Jews. And then they spat on him. And took the reed. And struck him on the head.

In fact. The language suggests. That they continually. Struck him on the head. With that reed. Probably every soldier there. In the garrison. Took their turn.

[20:20] Spinning on him. And hitting him in the head. And many many other things. They did. As Jesus said. In verse 33. That he will be scourged. He will scourge him.

Whip him. And they did. Very edge of life itself. I guess if Jesus had been just a normal man. He might have died from the scourging.

But he's not going to die until he said so. He gave his life. He dismissed his spirit. But all these things happened to him. The severity of it is staggering.

When you really delve into the description of how Jesus was persecuted. And beaten. And all of these things. In fact.

When they were through with him. Even his own mother would have difficulty recognizing him. If she had not known him. That it was him. She would not have recognized him.

[21 : 16] As a matter of fact. We have Isaiah's prophetic description. Of what Jesus looked like. After they were done with him. In Isaiah chapter 52. Verse 14. The Bible says.

The prophet said. His visage. That means his appearance. Was marred. Marred. That is it was distorted. It was distorted.

Disfigured. More than any man. That is beyond any human semblance. And his form was. Form more than the sons of man.

And the point is. He no longer looked human. They were finished with him. And then Jesus said. They will kill him. Crucify him.

So the severity of Christ's saving work. The certainty of it. The necessity of it. The severity of it. And then one more. The vitality.

[22 : 13] The vitality of it. The saving work of Christ. His life. And the third day. He will rise again. Glory. Hallelujah. And really.

Paul said. In 1 Corinthians 15. 57. Thanks be to God. Who gives us the victory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. And the point of the whole chapter. Chapter 15.

Is the resurrected. Living Jesus. Who gives us. The victory. Alright. So then. The Savior revealed. Jesus. Has given us.

All the basic elements. Of the gospel. Here. Has it? In fact. You can go to. Paul's declaration. In 1 Corinthians 15. And see. The same description. Paul said. I declare to you.

The gospel. That Christ died. For our sins. According to the scriptures. And that he was buried. And that he rose again. On the third day. According to the scriptures. So Paul. Says the same thing.

[23 : 10] Jesus said. Only Jesus says it. Before it happens. He reveals it. Before it takes place. Not after the fact. But before the fact. And so he thus.

Thus reveals. His. Saving work. The certainty of it. The necessity of it. The severity of it. The vitality of it. The salvation. Let's move on.

Down. Through the text. First. The savior revealed. Then second. As we kind of move. To the next movement. Of the story. The salvation.

Concealed. Salvation. Concealed. I. You know. Again. What comes next. Just. Is mind-boggling. it's even confusing really verse 34 but they understood none of these things this saying was hidden from them and they did not know the things which were spoken I mean how many how many different ways can you say the same thing I mean three ways the same thing is said about the disciples amazing it's kind of a three layered description of their ignorance triple ignorance in fact when you look at it really the force of this the depth of their ignorance is made quite clear in the first place they understood none of these things and the word understood means to bring together we understand that they could not put all these facts together and make any sense out of it I mean the facts that Jesus just gave them the simple bare facts no symbolism no figurative language is just clear they're going to beat me kill me and I'm going to raise from the dead

[25 : 00] I mean those are the facts and they couldn't put all that together and make any sense they understood none of these things and then the second kind of layer of their description of their ignorance what Jesus said was hidden from them and the word hidden just simply means concealed bailed obscured they just couldn't see it and then third they did not know the things spoken they didn't know these things and the word ginosko in the Greek it means something learned and so the idea is they could not come I mean Jesus revealed what's going to happen step by step and they could not comprehend what Jesus said because in their kind of fund of knowledge they had no category for it they didn't it didn't fit anywhere in their knowledge and understanding and so forth you see they were really ignorant and so what Jesus was talking about did not line up with their messianic theology

I like the way MacArthur put it they expected messiah to be a king and we knew that didn't we we talked about that before and that's what they expected they expected messiah to be a king who would defeat Israel's enemies and establish his king they were looking for a coronation not a crucifixion they were looking for a messiah who would kill his enemies not one who would be killed by his own people the idea of a crucified messiah was an absurdity to them it was so ridiculous that

they could not even comprehend it that really does capture where they were but should they have understood I mean you know the truth about a sacrificial savior that truth is woven all throughout the Old Testament

I've mentioned this a number of times before you can go all the way back to Genesis all the way back to the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eden and after they sin they finally notice they're naked and they're ashamed and they're hiding even from God and it's all a picture of their guilt their sin guiltiness before God and that's what sin does it separates us from fellowship with God and so what does God do in their behalf he kills some animals I like to think they were lambs it doesn't say kills some animals shed their blood the first first death in all of God's creation and he took their skins and made clothing as a covering for their shame the picture of salvation all through the shedding of blood and you can go further not very far ahead to Cain and Abel and they each brought their sacrifices and Abel brought the firstling of his flocks and shed the blood of that lamb as a sacrifice an offering to God and Cain brought the you know the works of his own hands his crops seeds and whatever else

God did not accept his sacrifice he accepted Abel's sacrifice why because it was a blood sacrifice something Cain should have already known because Jesus or God had already taught the first lesson about that with his parents Adam and Eve when he shed the blood to cover their sin and then you can go forward to Abraham and his son Isaac and God had commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac and as the two of them are walking up the side of Mount Moriah and Isaac is a little bit perplexed he said we're going to sacrifice but where's the lamb and Abraham said prophetically God will provide himself a lamb and he did that day a ram caught in the thicket and was sacrificed but looking forward it would be the lamb of God that would one day come as the sacrifice really very clear go to

Egypt and Moses and the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt and how were they ultimately delivered through the blood of lambs lambs blood spread all over the doorposts of their homes and so when the the destroyer came to kill the firstborn of every family when he saw the blood he would pass over I mean and all throughout the sacrificial system that runs down through the Old Testament that God had prescribed for Israel all of that was a foreshadowing of the coming of the sacrificial lamb the lamb of God and so when you move into the Old New Testament you have John the Baptist there declaring behold the lamb of God and everyone knew what a lamb was for they all knew what he was talking about the lamb was for atonement the blood shed and the sin covered but John said something a little bit different he said behold the lamb of

[30 : 44] God who takes away the sin of the world John was pointing right at Jesus see all throughout Old Testament on into the new Hebrews 9.22 is taught us without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin disciples should have known that they had eyes but they could not see and that leads to the final part of the text a savior revealed salvation concealed and then finally a sinner healed you know when you think about it what could be more timely than this kind of chance encounter with a blind beggar although it was not by chance all this is orchestrated and so after we learn of the blindness of the disciples what happens we meet a really blind man a truly blind man physically one who illustrates all that

Jesus has just said and also illustrates for us meaning of this blindness and the only deliverance from it let's just kind of follow the story verse 35 then it happened once upon a time actually it ties us to this dialogue between Jesus and his disciples then it happened after Jesus personal talk with his twelve something happened then it happened as he was coming near Jericho that a certain blind man sat by the road begging so he's a blind poor beggar we can get that he's begging because he's poor that's what poor people do they beg and he's poor because he's blind he is a blind poor beggar may I just interject here what is man apart from Christ but a poor blind beggar in spiritual beggar and a good thing about the story is this man knows that he is poor blind and beggar he knows no pretense about it no covering it no denying it no trying to hide it he knows he is verse 36 and hearing a multitude passing by he asked what it meant so they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by and that's what he was waiting for and looking for and hoping for yearning for and so verse 38 he cried out saying

Jesus son of David have mercy on me so he's desperate isn't he right he's desperate hopeless destitute and this is true of every everyone who comes to Christ and is saved you remember the first beatitude in Matthew chapter 5 blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven remember that beatitude and by the way the word poor that Jesus used in that beatitude it does not

refer to just simply someone who's below the poverty line the poverty line can change he's not talking about that the word Jesus used was the most severe word possible to describe this person's condition and it means begging poor it is someone who is so poor that they have been reduced to begging they have no hope otherwise that's what

Jesus is talking about blessed are those who are so destitute in spirit so beyond any hope of life of survival that they are reduced to begging begging to survive begging to stay alive that's what the word means and that's what this man is doing when he cries out to Jesus and what does he ask for mercy that's first thing mercy and then I love what happens next verse 39 then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet get that you know let's not have too much emotionalism here you know you're just getting out of hand you be quiet you're making a spectacle of yourself you're a nuisance and besides

Jesus didn't have time for people like you they actually rebuked him what he did cried out all the more I love that I love that see don't quit give up Jesus is passing by and so cry out and when others kind of quench you your friends your family whoever they may be cry out all the more verse 40 so Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to him and when he had come near he asked him saying what do you want me to do for you now get that huh what do you mean what do you want me to do for you I mean Jesus how could Jesus not see how could he not know what this man needed it's obvious for everyone to see and then you add on top of that who

[36 : 53] Jesus is I mean how in the world could he not know what this guy wants and needs the answer to that is of course he did know he just wanted this man to be honest and ask him you know this man could have asked for anything I don't mean he could have asked for anything he'd gotten it but he could have asked for anything could have asked for food clothes a house to live in could have asked for money anything I wonder how many times people ask for material things thinking that somehow that's going to satisfy the spiritual poverty in their hearts and lives so what did he ask for Lord that I may receive my sight Jesus said to him receive your sight wonderful you know what the disciples should have asked that question that's what they should have asked

Jesus revealed a great truth about his saving ministry what he had come to do and they didn't understand it but did they ask him to explain it they should have asked Jesus we don't see it open our eyes they had eyes but they could not see this poor blind beggar didn't have any eyes to see but suddenly he can see he can see think about it Jesus revealed to them his disciples what he had not openly revealed to anyone else they could not see it they were blind they should have pleaded with you have mercy on us heal our spiritual blindness you know it's interesting I mentioned that this is not the first time Jesus gave this revelation to them back there in Luke chapter 9 verse 44 Jesus said to his disciples he said let these words sink down into your ears for the son of man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men and how did the disciples respond to that well let me remind you but they did not understand this saying and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it exactly the same thing we have here Luke 18 they didn't!

get it then! they still don't have it now and then it goes on to say though in that passage they were afraid to ask him about this thing well that's their whole problem they were blind and they would not ask Jesus to open their eyes they were afraid to ask they could learn a thing or two from this beggar and so could we disciples have eyes but they can't see the poor beggar is blind but he can see in fact I would suggest to you that he could see even before Jesus physically healed his eyes he could see see this beggar was more than just healed physically he was saved he was saved that's what Jesus said verse 42 then Jesus said to him receive your sight your faith has made you well don't misunderstand here he's not talking about physical wellness the word the phrase has made you well that's four words in English is really a translation of a single word in the Greek text and it is the word sozo and it is almost always a reference to Christian salvation this man was saved now let's pull all this together this morning I'll be finished see why could this blind man see what the disciples at least at this point did not see why the answer to that is the answer to how a person to be saved how a person is saved from spiritual poverty of blood and so here are four things that must happen number one acknowledge your true condition before

[41 : 46] God acknowledge as agree with God about who you are really not who you think you are or want to be or have some delusion about but who you really are and that is desperately poor apart from Christ eternally poor hopelessly spiritually blind acknowledge that's the first step that's what this man did acknowledge your true condition before God second appeal appeal to God on the basis of grace and mercy that's what this man did Jesus so David have mercy and then third ask

God to heal you of your spiritual blindness and poverty ask him to save you save me and then fourth after all of that activate your faith activate your faith by worshiping and following

God otherwise you're just really just kind of playing games with them and this man in verse 43 followed Jesus glorifying God acknowledge your true condition before God appeal to God on the basis of grace ask God save then actively live worship glorifying God dear people Jesus is passing by this morning what do you want him to do