

before," that is, the leaders in the procession, tried to stop him. But it was without success, for *he cried the more a great deal*. He had learned not to expect much kind treatment from a crowd; but is persistent in seeking to attract the attention of Jesus, whose sympathy for the helpless was now well-known.

III. Faith Winning, 49-52.

V. 49. *Jesus stood still*, and so the procession also stops. *Be of good comfort*. A wonderful change in a few moments, from the rebuke and perhaps rough usage the crowd had given him. *He calleth thee*. The disciples, at any rate, now expected that he would be cured, for they had seen many deeds of power and mercy. The marvel is that they and the crowd, many of whom also had seen His miracles, should have so misunderstood the man of Nazareth. But they were "slow of heart." (Luke 24: 25.) Still, their want of discernment and faith is no less marvellous than is that of His people now. We expect so little, and He does so much.

V. 50. *Casting away his garment*; his outer garment, or cloak, which would impede him in his course. *Rose*. The Rev. Ver., much more vividly, "sprang up." *And came to Jesus*; led by sound, for he could not see.

V. 51. *Jesus answered*; the cry of v. 47. *What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?* Jesus does not ask because He does not know; nor do our prayers to God give Him

information; He knows what we desire and need before we ask Him. (Matt. 6: 8.) But the direct request puts him who seeks in the proper attitude to receive. It is an acknowledgment of one's own helplessness. Here Jesus may have intended also to touch the sympathy of the crowd by making them see clearly the pitiable condition of the man whom they had just treated so harshly. *Lord*; Rev. Ver. "Rabboni," i.e. the very word used by Bartimæus, meaning, My Master. "The gradations of honor were Rab, Rabbi, Rabbon, Rabboni." *That I might receive my sight*. That Bartimæus believed in the power of Jesus to grant this, shows with what reverence he regarded Him. (John 9: 32.)

V. 52. *Go thy way*; at the same time touching his eyes (Matt. 20: 34): only possible for a man with sight. *Thy faith hath made thee whole*; restored his vision; and, as we see from the next words, brought him salvation in the kingdom of the Messiah. The strength of his faith was seen in the persistence of his outcry and in his prompt and direct request for sight. *Straightway*. All the evangelists note that the cure was immediate. The crowd had instant and present testimony to Jesus' divine power. *Followed him in the way*. He had less to give up than the rich ruler (See lesson of last Sabbath); what he had was doubtless dear to him and he leaves it all to follow Jesus. The reward of such giving up of all for Christ is indicated in Matt. 19: 29.

APPLICATION

Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me, v. 47. The prayer of God's saints in all ages has been for mercy. Archbishop Usher died with the publican's prayer on his lips. William Wilberforce, the liberator of the slaves, said when dying, "With regard to myself I have nothing to urge but the poor publican's plea, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" When Grotius lay dying at Rostock, the minister reminded him of the publican's prayer. "That publican, Lord, am I! God be merciful to me a sinner," he said; and then he died.

But he cried the more a great deal, v. 48. It is our right to pray to God for the things we need. It is His purpose that we should be complete men. We should allow no hindrance to prevent our seeking to have our defects supplied. Bartimæus felt blindness to be his chief defect and though many rebuked him, he cried out the more. We should imitate his persistence. But we should seek to have the true idea of completeness. The blind beggar of Jericho had not heard Jesus proclaiming the salvation of the soul. We have heard. The soul is first