

Text: Matthew 19:13-20:34

Section 1

*13Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. 14But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
15After laying His hands on them, He departed from there. 16And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" 17And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; 19HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."
20The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?" 21Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 22But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property. 23And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24"Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 25When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?" 26And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:13-26)*

How much contrast there is between the little children and the rich man! The children came (or were brought) to Him without pretension, without expectation of reward, and were content simply to have His hands laid on them and to be prayed over by Him. Jesus said that such a humble, believing, childlike spirit was present in those that would enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

1At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, 3and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. 4"Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:1-4)

The rich man, conversely, came to Jesus glorying in his own righteousness and obedience to the Law, evidently expecting to be acknowledged as an heir to the Kingdom of Heaven on the basis of his works. Well, the Bible teaches that we are not saved by works, but by faith, and that our attempts at works-righteousness are futile and even filthy before our holy and perfect God.

8For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

**6For all of us have become like one who is unclean,
And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;
And all of us wither like a leaf,
And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (Isaiah 64:6)**

Rather than simply telling him to cease trusting in works and follow Him by faith, Jesus told the young man to sell all of his possessions and follow Him. This was not to identify material wealth as a sin (otherwise righteous men like Abraham, Job, and David would have been in sin because they were blessed by God with wealth), but to identify the love of material wealth as a sin that kept him separated from God. This "root of all sorts of evil" caused this man to violate the Greatest Commandment. As such, he was unfit for the Kingdom of God.

6But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. 7For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 9But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. (1 Timothy 6:6-11)

35One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, 36"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' 38" This is the great and foremost commandment. 39" The second is like it,

‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ 40”On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 22:35-40)

By loving his wealth more than God, this man was in violation of the Greatest Commandment. Even though he had allegedly kept the rest of the Law perfectly, even this one sin was sufficient to separate him from God. In fact, the Book of James teaches that to break even one Commandment makes us stand guilty of violating the Law in its entirety. Whether or not there are degrees of punishment in Hell I don't really know. What I do know is that perfect obedience marred by even one sin will send you to Hell, and even the least unpleasant part of Hell (if there is such a thing) is not a place you want to be!

10For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. 11For He who said, "DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," also said, "DO NOT COMMIT MURDER." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. (James 2:10-11)

8”But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8)

If we will be saved, there must be nothing placed before God in our priorities. We have to love Him completely, with all of our being. If we confess Jesus Christ as Lord, then He is Number One. He is Master. Neither family, nor wealth, nor job, nor hobbies, nor anything else—not even *church* (the formal institutions thereof)—can be placed above Him. If He is not first, He is not Lord. If He is not Lord, He is not Savior, and we remain in our sins.

No matter who you are or what you do, you are not good enough for God's Kingdom, and neither am I. Only repentance of sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, appealing not to justice but to mercy, will save. Fortunately, we have the promise that all that cry out to Him for mercy will be saved. That, friends, is the Good News!

1Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. 2For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. 5For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. 6But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), 7or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." 8But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:1-13)

I would be remiss if I attempted to exegete this passage without mentioning the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. The one, like this rich man, was proud of his external obedience to the Law, and arrogantly expected justification on this basis. The other humbled himself before God, begged for mercy, and went home justified.

9And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 10"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11"“The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' 13"“But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14"“I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 18:9-14)

Only God can and does save. We are not able to save ourselves through works or obedience, nor can we do anything to make ourselves worthy of His salvation. There is certainly no room in Heaven for a prideful attitude like that of the Pharisee in this parable. It is simply because of His magnificent grace that we have the promise that:

13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:13)

4But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

Section 2

27Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" 28And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. 30"But many who are first will be last; and the last, first. (Matthew 19:27-30)

The Bible gives followers of the Lord Jesus Christ no promises of material abundance in this world. While isolated examples of wealthy, Godly men are found in the Scriptures (again, Abraham, Job, and David being representative examples), these are the exception, not the rule. As followers of Jesus Christ, the only promise we have regarding material wealth is that our basic needs will be met. If we receive this much, God has fulfilled His promises, and we are to expect no more. If He gives us more, we are to thank Him for His generosity, as He has granted us more than we could rightly be expected to receive.

8If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. (1 Timothy 6:8)

Moreover, if we do have more than enough to meet our needs, we are commanded to be generous, providing for those in need and giving liberally toward the doing of God's work.

17"Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you. (Deuteronomy 16:17)

1Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

15If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (James 2:15-17)

Jesus told His disciples that they can expect to abandon family and property in order to do His work. Furthermore, many were and are today being physically persecuted for naming the Name of Jesus Christ.

12Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (2 Timothy 3:12)

9"But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. 10"The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

11"When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. 12"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. 13"You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. (Mark 13:9-13)

Jesus told His disciples to expect abandonment, to expect difficulty, to expect persecution. While we may be fortunate enough to be spared the same predicament, if we must choose between Christ and home, or family, or freedom, or life, we must choose Christ. The reward received by those that endure is great indeed!

1Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." 5And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new " And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6Then He said to me, "It is done I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7"He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:1-8)

We must always look forward to the joy and reward that awaits those that follow Jesus Christ to the end...and the eternal punishment that awaits those that deny Him. The former should motivate us to press on, serving Him, worshipping Him, obeying Him, and seeking to glorify Him in everything we do. The latter should motivate us to continually **Test [ourselves] to see if [we] are in the**

faith (2 Corinthians 13:5), and to diligently bear witness to our unsaved friends and family. Repent of sin and confess Christ as Savior and Lord. Obey His commandments. Love and serve Him with all your being. Whatever difficulties happen in this life, the reward is worth it!

Section 3

1"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2"When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3"And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; 4and to those he said, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And so they went. 5"Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. 6"And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day long?' 7"They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' 8"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first.' 9"When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. 10"When those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. 11"When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, 12saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.' 13"But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14'Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. 15'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?' 16"So the last shall be first, and the first last." (Matthew 20:1-16)

Here we have a parable using a landowner to describe the Lord, and laborers to describe believers. First of all, I love that Jesus used this analogy—we're not saved to a life of lethargy and sloth, but to a life of labor and service to His Kingdom. Even the "rest" He described earlier in the Book of Matthew involves a yoke, an instrument of labor. His **yoke is easy** and His labor restful because He labors with us, but He expects that we will serve.

28"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

Moving on to the "meat" of this parable, there are a couple of possible interpretations, and they are not mutually exclusive—both may in fact be valid. The first is that the laborers that were hired in the morning are the Jews, the recipients of the first Covenant, and that those coming later are Gentile believers. This is in line with the teaching of the New Testament that salvation came first to the Jews.

16For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16)

Another interpretation is that those hired early in the day are those that are saved early in life. The next to come are saved as young adults, then middle age, and finally even "eleventh hour," practically deathbed conversions. Notice the response of those that came later: *because no one hired us*. This is equivalent to one that has gone through his entire life without hearing the Gospel, or at least without having it fall on "fertile soil." When he finally hears and believes unto salvation, he joyfully begins the work during what time he has remaining.

14How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" 16However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" 17So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. (Romans 10:14-17)

21For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; 23but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, 24but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Corinthians 1:21-24)

It is the **Word of Christ**, that foolish Message that causes so many to stumble, that God uses to draw people unto Himself. Those that respond in repentance and faith to the Call, young or old, Jew or Greek, will inherit eternal life.

12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:12-13)

Although we are called to a life of service to our Lord, Master, and Savior Jesus Christ, we serve because we are saved, not in order to be saved. In the parable, those called first expected a greater reward because they served longer. However, it was only because of the willingness of the landowner to hire them that they received any wages at all. Salvation is all of grace—we don't deserve it—and the eternal life He provides is given to us completely out of unmerited favor. Everyone that repents and believes, whether at age eight or 80, receives the same promise of eternal life.

4But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:4-9)

Section 4

17As Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, 18"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, 19and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up." 20Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him. 21And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left." 22But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23He said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father." 24And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers. 25But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. 26"It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:17-28)

Here Jesus declared His coming crucifixion and resurrection to the disciples. Remember that back in Chapter 16 He declared this to them, and the reaction He received was that Peter desired to stop these things from happening. This time, the disciples seem to have accepted the saying (although not to have fully understood it), and the reaction is different. This time, James and John, perhaps expecting this resurrection to immediately inaugurate Jesus' earthly reign, asked (through their mother) to receive particular places of honor in the Kingdom. Jesus used this occasion to instruct them as to what the "great ones" in His Kingdom, those with the "childlike faith" mentioned several times already in the Book of Matthew, will do. Not only did He tell them—He lived this manner of life before them, most vividly the night before He was crucified. Jesus is not a "do as I say, not as I do" Master—He demonstrated and lived servant leadership while on earth so that we as His followers would know how to conduct ourselves.

1Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

5Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:1-11)

1Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

1Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, 3Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, 4got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. 5Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" 7Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter." 8Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9Simon

Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." 10Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." 12So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13" You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14" If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15" For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. 16" Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. 17" If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. (John 13:1-17)

The Incarnate Son of God Himself, in an act of supreme humility, washed the dusty, dirty, probably calloused feet of His disciples in order to vividly demonstrate how we as Christians should behave toward one another. If God Himself did not consider it beneath Him to undertake the most menial acts of service, we also should be willing to give ourselves completely to serving Him and one another in whatever way is necessary.

Section 5

29As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. 30And two blind men sitting by the road, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" 31The crowd sternly told them to be quiet, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" 32And Jesus stopped and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 33They said to Him, "Lord, we want our eyes to be opened." 34Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him. (Matthew 20:29-34)

Jesus gave sight to the blind as an act of compassion, and to demonstrate that He was the promised Messiah, as He indicated to John the Baptist.

2Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples 3and said to Him, "Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?" 4Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: 5the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM. 6" And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me." (Matthew 11:2-6)

The two blind men were united in their request for sight. Jesus promised that when His people are in agreement regarding anything for which they ask, that thing will be granted to them.

19" Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 18:19)

Also, notice the persistence of the two men. They followed and called out to Jesus repeatedly, even as the rest of the crowd tried to stop them. Jesus commanded us to be persistent in our prayers, not losing heart. These men didn't, and their prayers were heard and answered. Likewise, each of us has prayers which seem to have languished unanswered for days or months or years. Jesus said to keep praying, and to trust God.

1Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, 2saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. 3" There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.' 4" For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, 5yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'" 6And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said; 7now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? 8" I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:1-8)

Finally, notice the response of the two formerly blind men: they *followed Him*. The only legitimate response to an encounter with Jesus Christ is to follow Him. Forsake sin and confess Him as Lord—the reward is unimaginably great! Reject Him and continue in sin, and the punishment is equally unimaginable. I like the first option better!