

## Overcoming Obstacles To Our Salvation

Text : **Mark 10: 46-52**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

#### **A. Everyone has obstacles in his life to overcome.**

1. We all have different obstacles to overcome. ( **Every individual is unique.** )

a. Each one of us tends to think our obstacles are worse than others.

( **Unlike our view of sins ... other peoples are always worse than ours** )

b. With God's help, there is no obstacle that one cannot overcome.

**Phil. 4: 12-13** I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

**13** I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

2. Some obstacles are easy to overcome, but others are a lifelong struggle.

a. The paraplegic confined to a wheelchair has a lifelong struggle.

b. The drug addict has a daunting task, but with self-discipline he can overcome it.

c. The key is proactively attack our obstacles no matter what they are.

#### **B. Win or loose, many of our battles leave scars, but every victory builds strength.**

1. Some of the battles leave physical scars.

2. The worse scars are those that can't be seen. ( Those that haunt us in our quiet times. )

3. We are formed by the obstacles we overcome.

a. Every victory builds our strength.

b. **We are all the sum total of our life experiences.**

#### **C. Learning to overcome obstacles is fundamental to success in all areas of life.**

1. Those who just drift loose. ( **One can fall down, but it takes power to climb.** )

2. This is just as true in the spiritual realm as in the physical realm.

3. God never promised us an easy passage through this life,  
just the opposite :

a. Jesus was taught obedience by the things He suffered. ... **Heb. 5: 8**

b. We develop faith by suffering through trials. ... **James 1: 2-4**

**By this lesson we will learn some principles from Bartimaeus, an overcomer.**  
**Review the text.**

## **I. Bartimaeus had to overcome a physical handicap, blindness.**

### **A. His handicap was central to his life.**

1. It determined his relationships.
  - a. He was dependant upon others.
  - b. He could not go to work or come home without help.
2. His blindness determined his occupation. ... Beggar.

### **B. Others took him to the same place every day. ( customary practice even now )**

1. He could not see other opportunities.
2. He couldn't move if his spot was not productive. ( Those who left him had to find him. )
3. He couldn't see who was passing by.
  - a. It could be another beggar, a robber or a very wealthy man.
  - b. Thus, when he heard anyone he cried out asking alms.

### **C. One day he heard a large crowd passing by.**

1. This was opportunity knocking, many prospects for alms.
2. When he was told it was Jesus :
  - a. He knew who it was.
  - b. He cried out even louder to be heard over the crowd.
3. "Have mercy on me!" could have been a cry for alms or a plea for healing.

\* **He did what was necessary to overcome his obstacles.**

**ILL.- Paralyzed Lady with advanced MS served on 2 government boards.**

## **II. Bartimaeus overcame the feeling of being lost in the crowd.**

### **A. Bartimaeus was literally lost. ( Always there, but invisible to many )**

1. He couldn't see where Jesus was in the crowd.
2. For all he knew Jesus could already have passed.

### **B. He had no one to take him to Jesus.**

1. The crowd was trying to shut him up. ( **Beggars were an embarrassment to them.** )
2. This was an opportunity Bartimaeus wouldn't let pass.
3. He was not going to be noticed if he did not draw attention to himself.
  - a. He was off to the side of the road.
  - b. Many people were between him and Jesus.
  - c. They were standing, but he was setting.

**C. Bartimaeus did what was required to overcome his obstacles. ( was proactive )**

1. He gathered the information ... Who is passing by ?
2. He cried out loudly enough to be heard over the crowd.
3. He defied those opposed to him.

**D. Everyone of us knows how Bartimaeus felt.**

1. We've all been the invisible man in a crowd.
2. We've all had times when we felt like life was just passing us by.
3. When no one else notices or cares, that's the time we need to cry out to Jesus.

**E. Likewise, we need to be open to the cries of others who set by the wayside unnoticed.**

**III. Bartimaeus had to overcome negative social pressure.**

**A. He lives with prejudice and disdain.**

1. He was commonly believed to be a wicked person. ( **Theory of retribution** )
2. Remember to blind man of **John 9:2** ... **“And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?”**
3. Thus, Bartimaeus would have been looked down on and disrespected.

**B. Bartimaeus was ridiculed.**

1. **“Shut up !”** .
  - a. They viewed him as unworthy to speak to the Lord Jesus
  - b. They were embarrassed to have one they looked down on address a holy man.
2. Don't bother the master; your problem is not important.

**IV. Bartimaeus had to overcome economic hardship.**

**A. Beggars are impoverished people.**

**B. Most likely, his cloak was the most valuable thing he owned**

1. There were special laws to protect the cloak of a poor man.  
**Exod. 22: 26-27** **“If you ever take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, you are to return it to him before the sun sets,<sup>27</sup> for that is his only covering; it is his cloak for his body. What else shall he sleep in? And it shall come about that when he cries out to Me, I will hear him, for I am gracious.**

2. Taking away a man's only cloak could kill him by exposure on a cold night.
3. Bartimaeus left his cloak and went to Jesus when called.
  - a. This was a demonstration of his faith.
  - b. It might not be there when he got back. ( **Large crowd = thieves** )
  - c. If it was gone he could not look for it. ( **He made a leap of faith.** )

#### **V. Bartimaeus followed Jesus after his sight was restored.**

- A. Who could blame Bartimaeus if he took off home to rejoice with his family.
- B. Having his sight restored would improve every aspect of his life.
- C. Overcoming his obstacles freed him to serve God.
  1. He was grateful for what he had received.
  2. This must be our response to salvation. **I John 4: 19- We love, because He first loved us.**

#### **APPLICATION :**

- A. We all have to deal with obstacles to our relationship with God.
  1. Some of the obstacles are physical.
    - a. Poor health can be an obstacle.
    - b. Advancing age can be an obstacle.

**\* We must learn to work around our physical limitation.**

    - **Spastic boy in a wheelchair could hardly talk, but converted four people in three years.**
    - **When working house to house I work with another guy to overcome the problem of my size. He set up studies and I taught them.**
  2. Financial problems can be an obstacle.
    - a. Some of us can't do things that cost money.
    - b. There are many things we can do that don't cost anything.
  3. Too much money is more often the problem for Americans.
    - a. We feel compelled to compete with the Jones.
    - b. We spend our future on luxuries for today. ( **cars, vacations, Electronics, houses** )

**\* Americans spend more on pleasure than most of the world does on necessities.**

**Remember Jesus the conversation between Jesus and "the rich young ruler." ... Matt. 19:16 f**

4. Our jobs can be an obstacle to our serving God.

- a. God expects us to earn our living. ( **Eph 4: 28, I Thes. 4:11** )
- b. Our job is to support our service to God, not provide luxuries.  
\* **Our debts make us the slaves of other men.**
- c. The impoverished Macedonians gave liberally, but first gave themselves. **II Cor. 8:1ff**

**B. Satan uses people close to us as obstacles to our serving God.**

1. Peter became an obstacle to Jesus accomplishing His mission.

**Mark 8: 33-** But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

2. Our family can be an obstacle.

- a. **Parents of a girl in Liloan kicked her out for being baptized.**
  - b. Our spouse can be uninterested in spiritual things. ( **Bro. Prince** )  
**I Cor. 7: 12-** But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her.  
**15-** Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace. **Don't let a spouse between you and God.**
  - c. Children or grand children can be obstacles. **Demanding of time or causing absence.**
3. Peers ... boyfriends ... girlfriends ... etc.

**C. The desire for pleasure is one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual growth and service.**

1. **I John 2: 15-** Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

2. But Sunday is my only day off and ....

- a. The only reason anyone has Sunday off is because of Jesus.
- b. That's why it is called the Lord's day. **Rev. 1: 10** ( **It's a day to reset our focus.** )
- c. BUT, I just want to relax and unwind after a hard week.

3. Recreation takes enormous time and resources away from the Lord.

- a. Travel
- b. Hunting, Fishing, Golfing, etc.
- c. TV

**None of these things are bad within themselves, but the Christian must never let anything come between him and his service to God. ( Rom. 8: 18 )**