

Mark 10:50

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

Analysis

This verse describes blind Bartimaeus' response to Jesus' call. The Greek *apobálōn* (ἀποβαλὼν, "casting away") indicates deliberate, forceful throwing off—not careful folding but urgent abandonment. The "garment" (*himation*, ἱμάτιον) likely refers to his outer cloak, which served as both clothing and blanket. For a blind beggar, this garment was probably his most valuable possession, used for warmth at night and as a collection receptacle for alms during the day. Bartimaeus abandoned his security to pursue Jesus. The verb *anastas* (ἀναστάς, "rose") carries resurrection imagery throughout the Gospels—the same word describes Jesus rising from the dead. Bartimaeus' rising from his begging posture symbolizes transition from one state of existence to another. The phrase *ēlthen pros ton Iēsoun* (ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, "came to Jesus") demonstrates faith in action. Despite his blindness, he navigated toward Jesus' voice, trusting that if Jesus called him, Jesus would receive him. This brief verse powerfully illustrates the nature of true faith:

1. urgent response to Jesus' call
2. abandonment of earthly security
3. movement from spiritual death (represented by sitting in darkness) to spiritual life (rising at Jesus' word),
4. determination to reach Christ despite obstacles.

Bartimaeus didn't let blindness, the crowd's earlier rebuke (v. 48), or concern for his possessions prevent him from coming to Jesus when summoned.

Historical Context

This encounter occurred on Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, just before His triumphal entry and passion. The location was Jericho, a significant city on the road from Galilee to Jerusalem. As a blind beggar, Bartimaeus occupied the lowest social stratum—unable to work, dependent on charity, ritually marginalized. First-century Jewish society viewed physical disabilities as potential signs of sin or divine judgment (though Jesus explicitly rejected this theology in John 9:2-3). Bartimaeus' repeated cry, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me" (vv. 47-48), demonstrated theological understanding beyond many religious leaders. "Son of David" was a messianic title, acknowledging Jesus as the promised heir to David's throne who would restore Israel. The crowd's attempt to silence him (v. 48) reflects typical attitudes toward beggars and the disabled—they were to remain invisible and silent. Bartimaeus' persistence despite social pressure revealed desperate faith. The detail that he "casting away his garment" may indicate confidence that he wouldn't need to return to begging—Jesus would either heal him or he would follow Jesus regardless. The fact that Mark preserves Bartimaeus' name (unlike most healing recipients) suggests he became known in the early church, likely as a testimony to Jesus' power and mercy. This healing, positioned just before Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to suffer and die, demonstrates that He came to give sight to the blind—both physically and spiritually (Luke 4:18).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What "garments" (securities, comforts, possessions, reputations) might God be calling you to cast away to pursue Jesus more fully?

2. How does Bartimaeus' determined movement toward Jesus despite blindness and obstacles challenge your own response to Christ's call?
3. In what ways do social pressures or others' disapproval tempt you to silence your cries to Jesus for mercy and help?
4. What does this passage teach about the relationship between desperate faith and miraculous intervention?
5. How does Bartimaeus' immediate following of Jesus "in the way" (v. 52) illustrate the proper response to receiving spiritual sight through Christ?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	δὲ	ἀποβαλὼν	τὸ	ἱμάτιον	αὐτοῦ	ἀναστὰς	ἦλθεν
G3588	And	he casting away	G3588	garment	G846	rose	and came
	G1161	G577		G2440		G450	G2064
πρὸς	τὸν	Ἰησοῦν					
to	G3588	Jesus					
G4314		G2424					

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