

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

How amazing to think that Jesus, on his way to be crucified, would stop and restore the sight of blind Bartimaeus. Even as he climbed the road to Calvary, Jesus was reaching out in love to those who needed him. I praise you today as the God who takes pity on all who are lost in darkness. Thank you so much for opening my eyes which were once blinded by sin. All praise and glory to you, the Redeemer of mankind!

Today in Your Word

No sooner had Jesus told his disciples for the *third* time that he was about to die, than James and John conspired with their mother to claim the prime positions of power in the Kingdom. How easy it is to get caught up in thoughts of personal prominence when the focus needs to be on serving others! Jesus' rebuke of his disciples reminds me that I need to imitate the example of your Son. He came, "not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Zacchaeus fascinates me because he is such a contrast to the rich young ruler. Jesus told the ruler to "sell all that you have," while Zacchaeus was permitted to sell only half. Jesus told the ruler to "come, and follow me," while Zacchaeus was allowed to stay in Jericho. Jesus told his disciples, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" yet Zacchaeus, who was "rich," entered with ease. Both men had taken the initiative to see Jesus, yet one went away sorrowful while the other was filled with joy. Why? What was the difference? Here are some that come to mind: (1) Zacchaeus had a keen awareness of his need, while the rich young ruler was focused on his good works, (2) Zacchaeus freely acknowledged his sin, while the ruler proclaimed his righteousness, (3) Zacchaeus was sorry enough to repent and make restitution, while the ruler was only sorry enough to leave in grief and self-pity, (4) Zacchaeus freely shared his wealth with the poor, while the ruler kept his wealth for himself, (5) Zacchaeus loved you more than his money, while the ruler loved his money more than you. What a contrast! Zacchaeus, more than many other characters in the NT, demonstrated the kind of attitude that you long to see in the hearts of your children. If I want to be welcomed into your Kingdom, I must imitate the simple faith and love of Zacchaeus!

Reflection

Jesus' parable of the nobleman and the ten slaves teaches me that you have entrusted me with gifts, talents and skills which you expect me to use in service for you. Am I being diligent and industrious in using those gifts? Am I working hard each day to expand and enlarge your Kingdom?

Request

Father, help me to be like the faithful servants who brought increase to your Kingdom. I may not be as talented or gifted as others, but I *can* use what you have given me to bring honor and glory to you.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for telling me how Mary anointed Jesus at Bethany. This shows me that every act of worship or service is noticed and appreciated by you. Indeed, Mary's simple act of love has been preached throughout the entire world in memory of her, and she stands as an inspiration to me to love you more!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: "[Have We Done What We Could?](#)" – Jennie B. Wilson.

Meditation Verse: Luke 18:42.