

February 2025 – There's lots to see for disciples

Please note Bible stories and themes may occasionally differ from this overview.

This February we see Jesus healing Bartimaeus, the blind man who believes in Jesus' ability to heal him. Bartimaeus experiences **joy** as his physical sight is restored. The story of three servants and a prince helps us to see the challenge Jesus gives and that **patience** may be needed. Jesus uses strong words to describe the times we may not want to see 'true life' on his terms and that good choices will require **self-control**. And finally, Peter, James and John see Jesus as a dazzling light and find **joy** in the knowledge that he is God's son. There are many aspects to 'seeing' this month as we continue to explore what discipleship involves.

Session 1

1/2 Feb

Session Aim: To know what happened when Bartimaeus met Jesus
Bible Ref: Mark 10:46-52

Today's fruit

Bartimaeus would have known **joy** when he had his sight restored.

Bartimaeus has his eyes opened

In this brief encounter, Jesus is leaving the town of Jericho with his followers. A large crowd gathers, but a blind beggar sitting by the road cries out to him for help. Perhaps it was a busy, noisy scene, meaning crying out was the only way to be heard?

Many people tell Bartimaeus to be quiet, but Jesus tells him to come to him. Bartimaeus leaves his coat and comes to Jesus. Jesus asks him what he wants him to do – a strange request, in answer to which he tells Jesus he wants to see again.

The encounter ends with Jesus telling Bartimaeus that he is healed because he believes, before Bartimaeus uses his new sight to follow Jesus on the road.

Think about

Have you ever called out to God in desperation? Is prayer the last thing you think to do? Are there people (like the crowd) who want to stop you from doing this?

Why do you think Jesus asks Bartimaeus what he wants him to do? Is it not obvious? Or is Jesus teaching us something here?

I wonder why there is a link between believing and being healed? Many people have faith but do not get healed today; this can lead to negative thinking. But what if 'healing' means something else, something more?

The blind beggar uses his new sight to follow Jesus along the road. What will you use your senses for today?

3-9 February: Children's mental health week

Let's think about the healing of our minds and how the history of Jesus might make an impact upon our outlook.

Session 2

8/9 Feb

Session Aim: To discover that Jesus expects us to use our resources well

Bible Ref: Luke 19:11-26

Today's fruit

Patience may be needed when we invest what we have.

A servant has his eyes opened

Many people thought that Jesus was going to establish God's Kingdom by forming an army and marching against the Romans. Instead, he knew that the Kingdom would come fully at the end of the world, so he told people to make the most of all God gave them now, through this story.

A prince was travelling far away, but first called three servants to look after his property while he was gone. He distributed bags of gold: five bags to the first servant, two bags to the second and one to the third. He told them to use it well over the following years.

The prince returned as king and asked how the servants had used it. The first had turned five bags of gold into ten – the king was delighted. The second had doubled it by putting it in the bank to gain interest – the king was again pleased. The third had buried it in the ground; nothing had changed. Jesus ended the story with these words:

'The king said, "The one who uses what he has will get more. But the one who does not use what he has will have everything taken away from him."
(Luke 19:26 *ICB*)

Think about

You may not be the servant of a prince, but what resources do you have that could grow? Is there something you have that could benefit others in a way which honours Jesus? 'Investment' does not have to be about gold or money.

Is Jesus asking us to look after what we have, or to change it in some way? When is it right to protect something valuable and when is it right to take a step to make it grow?

We know that Jesus is more interested in generosity than in gathering wealth. So what does this story mean for you?

It took years for the two bags of gold to gather interest in the bank. Do you need patience when investing your talents or time in honouring Jesus? (We do not become experts straight away.)

How does this final verse of Jesus make you feel? Does it create pressure or encouragement for you? [And what hard teaching is implied by the final verse of the chapter, verse 27?]

Session 3

15/16 Feb

Session Aim: To respond to strong words of Jesus

Bible Ref: Mark 8:31-38

Today's fruit

To value 'true life' and make good choices will require **self-control**.

Seeing 'true life'

Jesus taught his followers that there would be hard times ahead. Some of his teachings can be difficult to accept; we might not see things his way and struggle to accept it.

Jesus said the Son of Man would be killed and rise after three days. One of his followers, Peter, criticised him for saying this, but Jesus told him that Peter only cared about the things that other people thought to be important.

This was very challenging teaching. Gathering a crowd, Jesus carried on to teach that following him means refusing other things, even being willing to die on a cross, because giving up our lives for him means having 'true life for ever'.

Think about

Jesus is really turning up the challenge today by making us think about what we accept and what we refuse. How do you make choices? Do you think about your own needs first? Does Jesus' teaching ever come into your mind?

What makes it difficult to see things Jesus' way? Does your life get so full that you forget he is present or lose self-control? Is there anything or anyone that you would give your whole life to?

Jesus uses words like 'ashamed'. How does this strong language make you respond?

What does he mean by 'true life for ever'? Surely everybody dies, so 'true life' must be different from normal life. Can you even imagine what this might be like?

Session 4

22/23 Feb

Session Aim: To know that Peter, James and John saw Jesus in a new way
Bible Ref: Mark 9:2-10

Today's fruit

Jesus' disciples must have known **joy** at this moment of knowing he is God's son.

A dazzling sight

Jesus took Peter, James and John and went up on a high mountain. There his clothes became 'shining white'. Two men then appeared and began talking to him; they were well known in religious history from the Old Testament – they were Moses and Elijah.

Peter was frightened and didn't know what to say at this dazzling sight. He wanted to make three tents, one for each of the men standing before him. At this moment, they heard a voice from a cloud, saying, 'This is my Son.' Then Peter, James and John saw only Jesus.

Strangely, Jesus told them not to tell anyone about this moment until 'the Son of Man rises from death'. We cannot imagine how difficult this must have been, because moments like these bring joy when we know who Jesus is.

Therefore, the three disciples said nothing to anyone else, but instead discussed between themselves what Jesus had meant about rising from death.

Think about

How do you react when you see something that you do not understand? Do you panic or struggle, like Peter, to find the words?

Peter wanted to make three tents, possibly so that the men could stay there. Have you ever been in a situation you really enjoy, so much so that you want time to 'stand still'?

Is there another moment from previous sessions where a voice has said to Jesus 'This is my Son'? What difference do these moments make?

Why did Jesus talk about rising from death? Is there anything else he talks about that confuses us? I wonder why he told Peter, James and John not to discuss what they had seen? Surely, that is the opposite of what we might want to do?
