

In Mark 10:51 we read of the blind beggar Bartimaeus sitting by the roadside, calling out to Jesus as He walked by. Jesus stops and asks a very interesting question. He says, 'What do you want me to do for you?' There would seem to be such an obvious answer to this that we might wonder why Christ would ask such a silly question, for the man was clearly in need of healing. But perhaps Christ was hoping for something else. He does the same thing in John 5:6, when he heals the man by the pool of Bethesda. He first asks, 'Do you want to be healed?' Both of these men answer Christ very gently, when most of us would probably give a sarcastic retort. Just why did Christ ask these men these questions?

It may have been that Christ was seeking a deeper, much more spiritual answer. After all, his real ministry was preaching the kingdom of heaven, not holding a medical clinic. I think he would have loved to have someone answer: 'I want eternal life!' I wonder what we might answer if some one came up to us and said that he would grant us one wish; anything we wanted. I'll never forget in junior high that one of the guys who was supposed to be really 'cool' was asked what he wanted most in the world. He shocked everyone by answering very seriously that he wanted to go to heaven. You know, we are told to seek first the kingdom of heaven, but we usually get too tied down to this earth. That is why we think first of our physical needs, not our spiritual ones. All we seem to be interested in is this life.

Christ came with the power of God to offer mankind salvation and an eternal home, but everyone keeps asking him for healing, or riches, or food. He is like a peddler that comes by offering to give us gold, but we would rather have plastic. There were times in his ministry on earth that people quit following him as they realized that his ministry was spiritual in nature. But Peter hits the truth that we should all hold in our hearts in John 6:68, 'Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life!' Christ wants to know what we want, what our deepest desires are. Are they centered in Him or on this earth?