

Pentecost #22

10-24-2021

J.V. Trautwein, Pastor

Celebrate (Introduction)

“Can we pray the way Bartimaeus prays? People try to hush him up because by addressing Jesus as ‘Son of David’ he is making a politically dangerous claim that Jesus is the rightful king. Could our prayer ever be heard as a threat to unjust powers that be? Bartimaeus won’t give up or go away quietly, but repeats his call for help more loudly. Do we ask so boldly? And are our prayers an honest answer to Jesus’ question, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’”

We come together in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Opening Hymn: [“We Come to You for Healing, Lord”](#)

Psalm: Psalm 126

“When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,^[a]
we were like those who dream.

² Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,

“The Lord has done great things for them.”

³ The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb!

⁵ May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy!

⁶ He that goes forth weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.”

Hymn of Praise: [“O Savior, Precious Savior”](#)

Prayer of the Day

“Eternal light, shine in our hearts. Eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance. Eternal compassion, have mercy on us. Turn us to seek your face, and enable us to reflect your goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.”

1st Reading: [Jeremiah 31:7-9](#)

2nd Reading: [Hebrews 7:23-28](#)

The Gospel: [Mark 10:46-52](#)

Hymn of the Day: ["Rock of Ages"](#)

The Message: ([Video Link](#))

Whether we like it or not, we cannot travel through life without being confronted by those who may be less fortunate than us. They may be economically impoverished, physically or mentally impaired, suffering from debilitating and painful illnesses, drug or alcohol addicted, and maybe even suffering the misery of loneliness, you name it. They are there even though we may want to turn a blind eye to them. To just walk by trying to ignore them may play on our conscience but then try to quickly change our focus to something much more pleasant. We may even rationalize why we just walked by without extending some gesture in order to help them. But in general we really don't want to face the reality that there is pain and suffering in life. In many ways the old saying holds true, "There but by the grace of God am I."

It is much more pleasing to turn our eyes to those who seem to be normal, happy, and socially acceptable. To only see the beautiful life and without any signs of devastating problems is so less demanding upon our conscience and our lives in general. This is what made the pandemic so difficult to live through. We were reminded daily of the life and death situation which so many were suffering through. We could hardly avoid being aware of the pain and suffering since in some limited ways everybody was suffering from it. The mental pain of isolation which was commonly experienced became almost an inescapable reality. We longed for the presence of someone else or just to hear their voice. In a limited way we found out what it was to be an outcast and feeling that nobody cares about us. In so many instances there was not that helping hand to help us along the way. We were on our own trying to make the best out of a difficult time. The reality of how much we needed each other came home to us.

This experience should bring new life to stories like in our gospel lesson this morning. Jesus and his disciples had been journeying for several days towards Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. Literally tens of thousands would make the journey every year to celebrate this most important holiday in the life of the Jew. On their journey, Jesus and his disciples had to pass through the town of Jericho, the home of many of the Temple priests, just some fifteen miles from Jerusalem. During this time of the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem, when groups of pilgrims journeyed through towns the locals, who couldn't go to the holy city, would gather in the streets to wish those on their journey with gestures of good wishes. Of course many of these locals could have been Temple priest who had not yet begun their journey but would shortly do so for all the priests were need in Jerusalem for the Passover.

Now on this particular day word must have circulated throughout the town that the outspoken man who had continually challenged the religious authorities was traveling through their town.

This meant that many additional curiosity seekers would join the crowds lining the street hoping to get a glimpse of this man who some called a prophet or even the messiah. Like in many of His journeys Jesus would not only be accompanied by His disciples but often a large crowd of followers longing to hear anything that He may have to say. The only naysayers were the Priests who were the target of Jesus' denunciations.

Now it must be noted, in that day many who were handicapped or diseased were considered to be unclean and therefore were kept outside of the town's boundaries or walls. Therefore they would sit outside of the town's gates in order to beg as a means to stay alive. This particular day was not unlike any other for a blind beggar named Bartimaeus in that he took up his regular station outside the city gate on the road to Jerusalem. When hearing the crowd coming towards him he began asking why the unusual commotion? Finally, after being ignored by many, someone told him that Jesus of Nazareth was coming by. Bartimaeus must have heard about Jesus doing great miracles and that he may even heard that he was the messiah. Therefore, when hearing this news he immediately shouted out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

It is interesting to note this blind beggar called Jesus the Son of David which is used infrequently in the gospels and the only time in the gospel of Mark. The Son of David is a messianic term and of course refers to the long awaited Jewish messiah. Clearly Bartimaeus thought Jesus was the traditional messiah and as it turned out he would become a follower of Him thinking, along with the others, that He truly was the long awaited Messiah.

With his shouts Bartimaeus was making such a scene as to disturb many in the crowd for they emphatically told him to be quiet or most likely to shut up. They didn't want to be reminded of pain and suffering and especially didn't want their time with Jesus disturbed, especially by some unclean outcast. It was to be a beautiful moment for them and not one which made them come face to face with reality. Bartimaeus though would not be denied. This was his chance to escape the suffering of his life of darkness and no admonishments from the crowd could keep him from realizing his dream. Therefore he called out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Bartimaeus' persistence paid off for Jesus had heard the pain in his voice and the faith he had in spite of the potential consequences of the crowd. With the second plea Jesus stopped in his tracks and told the agitated crowd "Call him here." He didn't ignore the cry of someone in need. He didn't just keep on walking as the crowds perhaps wanted Him to do. With these words, "Call him here" Jesus placed the crowds' conscience on the line and they immediately had a change of heart. We are told that they then "... called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, he is calling you.'" At last this was his chance. He didn't hesitate for he jubilantly threw off his cloak and jumped up and went to Jesus. Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus did not beat around the bush in his request, he did not seek sympathy but went to the core of his need, "My Teacher, let me see again." This request showed no hesitancy in his belief that Jesus could heal him for he didn't say "if it is possible" for he knew

Jesus could give him his sight. He not only felt that Jesus could do this but he had faith that He would do it.

Jesus reply was what he had so longed wished for and hoped to hear. He most likely thought he would never hear these words but now his faith lead him to believe it would happen even before Jesus said, “Go, your faith has made you well.” With these words the blind man who suffered so long then regained his sight. You could almost imagine the scene. He must have been overwhelmed with joy. Going from person to person he must have said “I can actually see you, I can see again.” The crowd that gathered around Jesus must have looked at each other, in utter astonishment, “Do you believe what you just saw? “

They knew this beggar and knew how they had treated him in the past now they had to come to grips with themselves and overcome their past conceptions in order to see him as a perfectly well human being. How could they one minute see a person as unfit and outcast and the next moment as being whole and normal? This must have had its effects upon them. It also must have made them think how they treated other beggars who were looked upon as outcast and beyond being fit to be a part of the niceties of life. Their lives had to be changed by this healing of a blind beggar.

This story of a Jesus miracle of healing ended up to be rather unique among all of His other healings. It ends with the healed beggar, without any hesitancy, immediately following Jesus as they continued on their way. He didn't stay back to celebrate with family or go to the priest to be declared clean and eligible to return to society. His life was now changed and for him it now included being a follower of the one who gave him this new life. This was his way of giving thanks, Mark's story makes each of us then become introspective. What has our response been whenever we have experienced healing for an illness or having overcome some tragedy in our lives. Far too often we may like so many just go our merry way without giving recognition or thanks to those who have helped us through the healing process, Ultimately we may go our merry way without acknowledging the God-given gifts which have been given to us in order to bring comfort and healing to us and others. This is an especially important message during this time of the pandemic. To ignore these gifts is to ignore the value and lives of our fellow human beings. It means we just walk on by. This is not the way that Jesus has taught us. This is not the way of God's love.

Anthem: [“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”](#)

Offering*: ([On-Line giving Link](#))

We give thee but thine own, what e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

The Prayer

Ever loving father, regrettably life presents many with difficult circumstances to overcome. It is often that these realities may confront us with the message of needing help. Give us the

compassion so that we do not walk away from the need but answer their call with a helping hand. When we are so stricken and find relief never let us forget to be thankful for those who have helped us by extending our love to others in need. During this pandemic may we do what we can to help slow the spread of this deadly virus.

We pray for all who need your comforting and healing presence especially Bob and Pat Allen, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, the Cronin family, the Elshafei family, the Fultz family, Kraig Greff, the Johnson Family, Robert Karner, Charles Larsen, Donna Mayhew, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, David Otto, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Linda Rigby, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family,, Della, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Linda Williamson, Wyatt Lee Wolf, Pastor Jack,
We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you;
The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters
Live on knowing God's love,
The joy of living this life of love,
And the peace which only comes through the power of His presence within you.
So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

Closing Hymn: ["Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"](#)

Announcement

Services will be outdoors unless inclement weather conditions force us indoors. Face masks and social distancing outdoors are not required. An email will be sent late Saturday afternoons stating whether indoors or outdoors.

*Offering to be sent to:

Bob Brackbill
10274 Raleigh Tavern Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church
9122 Sybert Drive
Columbia Hills

Ellicott City, MD 21043

<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291