

<https://confessionsofanover-workedmom.com/easy-advent-wreath-craft/>

Mark 10:46-52

⁴⁶They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, **he began to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”** ⁴⁸**Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”** ⁴⁹Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.” ⁵⁰So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. ⁵¹Then Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.” ⁵²Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

October 24, 2021 – Blind Bartimeaus

“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Bartimeaus – the blind beggar...shouted out. ⁴⁸Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Bartimeaus may have been physically blind, but he was not inwardly blind. He had what we would call ‘insight’...an inner knowing. He knew that this passing Jesus was extraordinary. He was compelled to shout out his plea ...‘have mercy on me’. He calls Jesus ‘Son of David’...another way of saying ‘Messiah’ a title of honour...He later calls him ‘teacher’ or rabbouni, a very esteemed term ...only Mary Magdalene calls Jesus that much later in the garden after his resurrection.... Bartimeaus knew Jesus’ passing was a once in a life time event. He was right.

All the way through the Gospel of Mark, Jesus has been on the road to Jerusalem and this is the last stop. Next will be the triumphal entry into Jerusalem which we remember on Palm Sunday. That we know is followed by his betrayal, trial and crucifixion.

Bartimeaus is special. He is named. Jesus has healed others –a deaf-mute, a blind man, a lame man, and the demon-possessed, but none of them has a name. Not even the rich young man who couldn’t forsake his possessions has a name, but a blind beggar does.

What makes Bartimeaus, the blind beggar different? He admits his vulnerability, his need. He shouts ‘Have mercy on me!’ He’s a beggar here, but he is begging not for money but for help, Jesus’ help. In front of a large crowd, against efforts to ‘shush’ him, he redoubles his cry...have mercy on me! He recognizes his need of Jesus’ healing. It is his need that is the pathway to connection with our Lord. This connection begins his discipleship. He’s not after recognition like James and John, sons of Zebedee in last week’s Gospel...wanting places of honour on the right and left of Jesus in paradise. He wants Jesus. He needs Jesus’ help.

‘Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.’ These words of Bartimeaus are a staple in our Christian worship...kyrie eleison...Lord have mercy. They are repeated often in the liturgy. They are sometimes called the Jesus Prayer. The Jesus Prayer is a very famous prayer, especially in the Eastern Orthodox Church where it is repeated over and over using a prayer rope...Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me a sinner. It declares our profound dependence on the mercy of our Lord.

Brene Brown, a psychologist and story teller has become very well known because of her studies on vulnerability. She says we need to share our ‘vulnerability’. It is by having the

courage to be honest about who we really are, that we connect with each other. Here is a short video. There is lots more about Brene Brown online and she has written books if you want to find out more.

<https://youtu.be/ZkDaKKkFi6Y>

Part 2 of this morning's Gospel is **Jesus' reaction** to Bartimaeus.

“Jesus stood still and said, ‘Call him here.’” Even in a crowd, Jesus' ears are specially tuned to hear the *kyrie eleison/ Lord have mercy* whenever and wherever it may be voiced. I think that is still true today. Jesus hears our calls of ‘Lord have mercy.’

Then his question to Bartimeaus:

“What do you want me to do for you?”

What an amazing question.

“What do you want me to do for you?”

Today our Lord is still asking each of us. What is it we really want our Lord to do for us? He's asking. **He** knows we need him. Do **we** realize that we need him? Do we resist some of the time?

We are all beggars. **We have no claim on Jesus other than that we are in deep and desperate need of his mercy. It is the key that unlocks the heart of the Lord.**

It is amazing to me how often, deep down, we resist this simple truth. We want to get Jesus' attention to notice how good, how important, how devoted we are. Like James and John, we want a place of admiration and influence. Why is it so hard to utter these simple words? Yet, our need for mercy is the only claim that we have on Jesus.

After Bartimaeus regained his sight, he stayed close and followed Jesus along the way. May we also stay close to our Lord, and follow him along the way. Amen.

But here in Jericho, just as Jesus enters the final step of his journey to Jerusalem, here's someone who gets it. The significance of this man's commitment comes through with the fact that he has a name. Jesus has performed a number of miracles up to this point in the gospel—a deaf-mute, a blind man, a lame man, as well as the demon-possessed, but none of them has a name. Not even the rich young man has a name, but a blind beggar does. Mark makes sure to mention it even though he has to explain it to his Gentile audience: son of Timaeus.

Perhaps it's because this man has become known in the early church, maybe he's even become a leader. But for Mark, the significance of Bar Timaeus is surely that he demonstrates the characteristics of a real disciple. The Twelve are denying Jesus' mission and vying for power. The rich young man makes a fatal choice to keep his money rather than follow Jesus call to give it all away and follow him. Bar Timaeus joyfully follows the Lord into Jerusalem. Now here is a real disciple.

“Jesus stood still and said, ‘Call him here.’” Jesus' ears are especially tuned to hear the *kyrie eleison* whenever and wherever it may be voiced. We are all beggars. We have no claim on Jesus other than that we are in deep and desperate need for his mercy. It is the key that unlocks the heart of the Lord, and it is the key to entering the house of the Father.

It is amazing to me how often, deep down, I resist this simple truth. I want to get Jesus's attention when he notices how good, how important, how devoted I am. Like James and John, we want a place of admiration and influence. Why is it so hard to utter these simple words? Yet, my need for mercy is the only claim that I have on Jesus.

There is tremendous social pressure to stifle the cries of human pain and neediness. When people sink deeply into grief, they often hear the message, "Get over it!" When the poor and homeless make their presence known society wants to make them invisible. When victims cry out for justice, they are often told to just take it and move on. When people commit crimes and seek mercy to rebuild their lives, society wants to lock them up and throw away the key.

Often, in Jesus's encounters with the sick and needy, there's a kind of lethargy to their response. They are so used to a life of need, that it's hard for them to really think that something can be done for them. Bar Timaeus is different. Mark paints a picture of eagerness and energy. He "throws off his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus." He knew this was his only real hope.

https://youtu.be/vwFN6r7Y_Sg

https://youtu.be/H4kMA4fSV_k

"I would say my faith is probably the organizing principle of my life," Brown says.

<https://youtu.be/ZkDaKKkFi6Y>

<https://youtu.be/ZkDaKKkFi6Y> *****

https://youtu.be/liDkJ_twYbE

