

**Grace, mercy and peace are yours in abundance through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.**

<sup>46</sup>They came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, a blind man, Bartimaeus the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road begging. <sup>47</sup>When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” <sup>48</sup>Many told him to be quiet, but he kept shouting all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

<sup>49</sup>Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” They called the blind man, saying, “Cheer up! Get up. He is calling you!” <sup>50</sup>He tossed aside his outer garment, jumped up, and went to Jesus.

<sup>51</sup>“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man replied, “*Rabboni*, I want to see again.” <sup>52</sup>Jesus told him, “Go. Your faith has made you well.” Immediately he received his sight and began following Jesus on the road. (EHV). **This is God’s Word.**

**Dear Friends,**

In our Old Testament lesson we heard about Moses. He had quite a life. When he was born, the leader of Egypt said that if a Jewish woman gave birth to a baby boy, the baby should be thrown into the river. Moses’ mother didn’t want him to die, so she hid him in a basket in the tall reeds that grew by the river. Moses was found by the Pharaoh’s daughter and adopted by her and so he was raised as an Egyptian.

Moses knew he was a Jew and one day he saw an Egyptian mistreating a Jewish slave and he killed that Egyptian. The next day when two Jewish slaves were fighting and Moses tried to intervene. The slaves didn’t want his interference and they made reference to him killing the Egyptian overseer. Moses felt that he had to flee the country because it was only a matter of time before the Pharaoh found out. Those Jewish slaves knew Moses by name but they did not know that one day he would lead them out of Egypt. They didn’t know who he really was or what he was going to do for them.

In the portion of scripture before us we have a similar situation. The people know Jesus by name but they really didn’t know who he is and what he is going to do for them, except for one man – the blind beggar. This blind beggar is going to help us answer the question, “**Who is this man, Jesus?**” This portion of scripture will help us to see that, “**He is the One We Cry Out to for Help,**” “**He is the One who Answers Our Cry,**” and “**He is the One We Follow.**”

**I.** Who is this man Jesus? There was a large crowd following him, but when the blind man asked who they were following, they replied. “**Jesus of Nazareth.**” That was a very common way to describe someone – give their name and the city they were from. But you might think they would have said something like, “The Christ” or “The Promised One” or even “The Messiah.” Something to indicate Jesus was a special person....but they didn’t. So why were they following him?

Maybe they had heard of his miracles or how he healed people and they were waiting to see him do something miraculous. Maybe they had heard that he spoke with authority, unlike any of the synagogue leaders, and so they wanted to come out and see exactly what kind of message he was preaching. Most likely they were waiting for something to happen. Anything. But when something did happen, it wasn’t what they were expecting.

Instead of Jesus doing something great and wonderful, this blind beggar started to call out, **“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on Me!”** Here was a person like so many other blind beggars that could be found through out the country and he was creating a disturbance. He was distracting them. The people around him tried to quiet him down. But the more they tried to quiet him, the louder he shouted, **“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on Me!”**

That name the blind man is calling out is a significant name. **“Jesus, Son of David.”** is a Messianic name – a name that identifies Jesus as the promised Messiah, descended from the line of King David. This blind man knew that if anyone could help him, Jesus, God’s Son could. This probably was not the 1<sup>st</sup> blind man to ask for help, but this was probably the 1<sup>st</sup> time that Jesus publicly accepted that Messianic title, “Son of David.” Jesus was headed for Jerusalem and for the cross. It was time people, especially his disciples, understood who he is and what he came to do – bring us redemption through the cross.

The blind man had faith. It was his faith that caused him to cry out to the one man that could help him. There are many times when we take Jesus for granted – so much so that we forget he can help us. There are times when we try and fix our own troubles in life and we just end up frustrated and depressed. Don’t forget who this man, Jesus, is. Don’t forget that he is the one we can cry out to for help. We may not be blind, but we all have requests for our Lord – whether it be requests for good health and healing or requests for peace or requests for help through difficult times – just like the blind man cry out to the one who can help you – cry out to the one who can answer your cry.

**II.** That’s what Jesus did for the blind man. He stopped and said, **“Call him.”** When the blind man came, he asked him, **“What do you want me to do for you?”** God promises to hear our prayers, but can you imagine getting a personal answer to a prayer? No wonder the man jumped up and threw his cloak aside. He was excited! Jesus was going to answer his cry for help. And that’s exactly what Jesus did. He healed the man. He gave him his sight back and then he pointed out, **“Your faith has healed you.”** We have to be careful how we understand those words, **“Your faith has healed you.”** The healing didn’t depend on the man’s faith, but it was the man’s faith that prompted him to make his request to the Son of God and Jesus chose to answer that man’s prayer with a “Yes.” Even better than that – the 1<sup>st</sup> thing this man got to see was Jesus, his Savior.

God encourages us to cry out to him in prayer too. In Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians we are encouraged to **“Pray continually.”** (1 Thess 5:17). The blind man certainly did that. He didn’t stop, even when those around him tried to quiet him. Jesus assures us, **“<sup>13</sup> And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. <sup>14</sup> You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”** (John 14:13-14). Whatever we ask, according to God’s will, he will give us. We want to keep that in mind. We don’t always know God’s will for us and so his answer to our prayer may be ‘yes’ or it may be ‘no.’ But in all cases we know God will answer us in the way he knows is best for us.

So don’t be disappointed by the way God answers your prayers. Keep praying, as the blind man did and no matter the answer, continue to follow your Lord. After Jesus healed the blind man he told him, **“To go.”** Where did the blind man go? He was no longer confined to that

stretch of road to beg for food. His sight gave him freedom and he used that freedom to follow after Jesus.

**III.** He wanted to hear more. He wanted to praise his Savior. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem – he was on his way to the cross. I can't say for sure, but this man may have followed Jesus to Jerusalem. He may have been there to witness Jesus suffering and crucifixion as Jesus paid for the sins of the world – for the blind man's sins and for your sins and for mine.

Jesus has opened our eyes to his salvation. He has called us to faith and freed us from the slavery of sin. What is our response? Do we jump for joy at his call or are we somewhat complacent? Jesus' words, **“Your faith has healed you,”** are meant for us also. Your faith brings you spiritual healing. Your faith brings you forgiveness for your sins. But it not only brings you the forgiveness of sins, it brings you so much more.

It brings you into God's family – the company of saints – you are not alone in this world. It brings you the promise that God will hear and answer your prayers. Your faith brings you the sure hope of eternal life in heaven when you die. It helps you through the tough days as well as the good ones. Your faith brings you to God's Word which guides you through your life. Your faith brings you to Christ.

Who is this man, Jesus? He is the one we cry out to for help, but even more than that He is the one who answers our cry. We know Jesus. He is the one we follow. He is our Savior. Amen.