

Order of Worship for 10-24-21

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: *“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”* - Hymn #803

Confession and Forgiveness:

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sins to God:

ALL: Lord God Almighty, we have sin against You both by what we do and by what we fail to do. We live as though You are not our God alone and have loved our neighbors as ourselves. No sacrifice can we make, no price can we pay to remove that sin. We deserve nothing but eternal suffering in hell.

P: Listen to what has happened to our sins:

Epistle Lessons: Hebrews 7:23-28

R: The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but Jesus holds His priesthood permanently, because He continues forever. Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for His own sins and then for those of the people, since He did this once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

R: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: Jesus Christ, our great High Priest is also the perfect sacrifice for our sins. He has more than paid the price for each one of us. In His place and by His command I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. We now live in forgiveness!

Entrance Psalm:

P: For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,

C: but the way of the wicked will perish.

P: Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,

C: nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

P: but his delight is in the law of the LORD,

C: and on His law he meditates day and night.

P: He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.

C: In all that he does, he prospers.

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,

C: but the way of the wicked will perish.

Prayer of the Day:

P: Almighty God, we pray, show Your humble servants Your mercy that we, who put trust in our own merits, may be dealt with not according to the severity of Your judgment but according to Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise: "I Lay My Sins on Jesus" - Hymn #606

Old Testament Lesson: Jeremiah 31:7-9

R: For thus says the LORD: "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'O LORD, save Your people, the remnant of Israel.' Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back, I will make them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn.

R: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel: Mark 10:46-52

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the tenth chapter:

C: Glory be to You, O Lord.

P: And Jesus and the disciples came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; He is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And the blind man said to Him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed Him on the way.

P: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise be to You, O Christ.

Children's Message (8:30 AM)

Sermon Hymn: *"Rise, Shine, You People"* – Hymn #825

Sermon: *"What Do You Want Me To Do?"* – Mark 10:46-52

Back in seminary, one of the required classes we all had to take was titled "Pastor as Counselor." On the first day, the professors who were team teaching the large class told us what they were going to do in the class. The seminary was on a quarter system at the time, so classes were only 9 weeks long. "We can't teach you how to counsel in nine weeks, but we might be able to teach you to listen." They said that because men have a tendency to jump to problem solving when listening to someone sharing a problem, and that's not the best way to go when counseling. Instead, we learned how to use reflective listening, being able to repeat back what someone says to us. Only after we had defined the problem, understood what the person was telling us, truly listened to them, could we move on to problem solving.

That's not only an issue in counseling. It can be an issue in relationships, too. When couples are talking, often the woman wants to just be listened to, while the guy wants to immediately jump in and solve the problem. I remember hearing someone give the advice to a newly married couple, that when a conversation begins, the guy should ask, "Do you want me to just listen, or do you want me to solve the problem?" Defining things like that at the beginning minimizes confusion and disagreement further down the line.

That seems to be Jesus' problem in today's Gospel lesson. Jesus asks a blind man, "What do you want me to do for you?" It would seem not to take the omniscience of God to need to ask that question. If that man is blind, he almost definitely wants to be able to see again! Jesus shouldn't need to ask this question that he already knows the answer to.

But we need to take a step back and look at what's happening to see why Jesus asks this question. In first-century Israel, blindness guaranteed only a life of extreme poverty, a life reduced to begging, lived completely dependent on the mercy and generosity of others. And unless one's blindness was self-correcting, there was no hope, no cure in sight.

And so when blind Bartimaeus hears that Jesus is walking by, he comes and cries out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" But there's a large crowd, and they don't want this blind man to bother Jesus. They may be traveling with Jesus, but they have forgotten what Jesus came to do. They are blind to the needs of Bartimaeus, and they're blind to Jesus' plans and purpose.

As we've been looking at the messianic prophecies in Isaiah during the Sunday morning Bible class, we've seen this mentioned. Isaiah writes several times that the Messiah will bring sight to the blind. Jesus fulfills this prophecy multiple times. He begins his ministry by reading one of those messianic prophecies of Isaiah. "And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are

oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:16-21). Jesus came to bring sight to the blind, light to those in darkness, to fix the effects of sin on the world.

Even when the crowds and disciples try to shut Bartimaeus up and make him go away, he cries out all the more until Jesus says, "What do you want me to do for you?" And so he reveals what he believes to be his deepest need: "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus tells him, "Go, your faith has saved you." And the blind man is healed, and he is saved, for by his bold request the blind man sees what others do not see: that Jesus saves and that Jesus gives more than you could ever ask (Mark 10:46-52).

When blind Bartimaeus cries, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me," this is the theology of the cross. He's asking Jesus for an act of loving kindness for his less than glorious daily life. "What do you want me to do for you?" and he answers, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight" (Mark 10:51). His answer is something specific, a mercy, given to a poor sinner by the all-powerful Jesus, who came to make the blind see.

This isn't the only time Jesus asks that question in this chapter of Mark's Gospel, though. Earlier, Jesus asked the same question to James and John, after they had asked him a question. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to [Jesus] and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" Their response to Jesus was full of pride. "'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you're asking'" James and John wanted positions of honor and glory, power and prestige, but that was not what Jesus had to give. He only had to give a life of humility and service, of persecution and suffering and death.

Jesus did not do what James and John wanted him to do for them, but he did so much more than they asked. After healing Bartimaeus, he enters into Jerusalem, with the crowd waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna!" Jesus would see those who were blinded by their own pride and power, and they would put Jesus to death. As Jesus hung on the cross, darkness covered the land, and everyone had trouble seeing. Yet Jesus rose again on Easter so we could all see what he had done for us on the cross, overcome sin and death once and for all.

How do you decide what to ask Jesus for? We can at least find part of the answer by looking at what we pray for, how we pray. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "The most promising method of prayer is to allow oneself to be guided by the word of the Scriptures, to pray on the basis of a word of Scripture. In this way we shall not become the victims of our own emptiness. According to a word of Scripture we pray for the clarification of our day, for preservation from sin, for growth in sanctification, for faithfulness and strength in our work." We don't want to become victims of our own emptiness, as James and John were. We don't want to just use Jesus to fill the empty places in our lives. We need to be guided by the word of scripture, to grow in

faith and sanctification. That growth may be painful, temporarily creating more emptiness in our lives, but that's only so we can be filled with more than we could possibly imagine.

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asks that. The question doesn't come from the lottery, doesn't come from the government, and doesn't come from the credit card company that wants you in debt for their prosperity. The question was first asked by someone who showed His sincerity by giving His life for you. “What do you want me to do for you?”

Helen Keller, who was blind and deaf, once said: "Better to be blind and see with your heart than to have two good eyes and see nothing." Bartimaeus saw with his hope-full heart, and Jesus healed him. Today, Jesus asks you the same question: "What do you want from me?"

We may have our own answers to that question, but Jesus gives us more than we could expect, more that we deserve, more that we could think we wanted on our own. Jesus comes to make you see! He comes to bring light into your life! He comes so that the works of God might be displayed in you. What a miracle! What a blessing.

Creed: Second Article of Creed and Explanation

Prayers:

P: Your Word proclaims to us that You come to us just as You did with Bartimaeus who heard these words:

C: “Take heart. Get up; He is calling you.”

P: You speak to us in Your Word and Sacraments and say,

C: “What do you want Me to do for you?”

P: What do we want from You?

C: Bits and pieces . . . A better grade on the next test? A day of peace and quiet? Some more funds in savings? A better test back from the doctor?

P: We forget that like Bartimaeus we are helpless. He had no Braille or seeing eye dog, or special training to help him live as a blind man. We too are blind, blind to all that it means that You are God and that You love us,

C: So we settle for little things thinking, “If only You did this,” or “If only You did that,” our problems would be solved.

P: Help us to want from You nothing less than complete healing.

C: Open our eyes as You did with Bartimaeus, to put our trust in You.

P: That we may hear from You as Bartimaeus did,

C: “Go your way, your faith has made you well.”

(other requests)

Lord's Prayer:

Closing Prayer:

P: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and, that we may obtain what You promise, make us love what You command; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing:

(Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: “O Son of God, In Galilee” - Hymn #841