

Mark 10:46-52

“Hi. How are **you**?” The traditional **response** is usually something like, “I’m **fine**. How are **you**?” When someone asks us how we **are**, we don’t even stop to **think** about it, because we know that the **traditional** response is what others **expect** to hear. Besides, it really wouldn’t be **appropriate** or **practical** to go into all the different **troubles** which we are experiencing, nor would we have the **time** or **inclination** to listen to **theirs**. So, the **traditional** response continues to be the **safe** response, for obvious reasons.

But how **are** you - I mean **really**? How **are** you? If I were to conduct a **poll** in the congregation this morning, do you think anybody here would honestly be able to say, “I’m **fine**”? I think that instead of finding a group of people whose lives are in complete **order**, the poll would probably uncover lots of **chaos** - lives which have been touched with tragedy, illness, fears; loneliness, betrayal; insecurity, debt; regret, despair; discord, bitterness, frustration - and a host of other hurts and problems. I would venture to say that all of us are suffering some kind of **hurt** which hasn’t **healed**. So today should be very special for all of us, as we come to **Jesus - The One Who Heals**.

The events of our text took place just before Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. That’s **significant**, because Jesus - who, in our text today, would relieve blind **Bartimaeus** of **his** suffering - was actually on His way to experience the extreme suffering of death on the cross **Himself**.

But for the moment, let’s just take a look at **Bartimaeus**. We can rest assured that **his** life must have been **filled** with suffering. We are told that day after day he sat at the roadside **begging**. How **empty** and **distressing** his life must have been. Yet one day, as he was sitting in his accustomed place, Bartimaeus became aware of a lot of **excitement**. When he asked what it was all about, he was told that **Jesus of Nazareth** was passing by, and in that moment, his life began to **change**. Bartimaeus started shouting, “*Jesus, Son of David, have **mercy** on me!*”

This is the only time in the Gospel of Mark where Jesus is called the Son of **David**. That’s **significant** because it was a title for the **Messiah** which was readily **recognized** among the Jews. You may remember that in the **past**, Jesus had not allowed such information to be openly **circulated**, because of all the **false** ideas which the people had regarding the Messiah. Most of them were looking for Him to be strictly an **earthly** ruler. So, in the **past**, Jesus would probably have

asked Bartimaeus to be **quiet** - but not **now**. Since Jesus was rapidly approaching Jerusalem, where He would accomplish on the cross everything the Father had sent Him to do, there was no longer any room for **misunderstandings** about His **role**. Jesus was **not** coming to establish an **earthly** kingdom, and Bartimaeus had figured that out. So in **that** sense, he wasn't really so **blind** after all. Of course, with his **physical** eyes he could see **nothing**. But, with his **spiritual** eyes, Bartimaeus **saw** what the Old Testament prophets and kings had **desired** to see. He **recognized** Jesus as the long-awaited **Messiah** - the Lamb of God who would take away the **sin** of the **world**.

From what Bartimaeus had heard about Jesus, he **also** recognized Him as a great **healer** who would be **merciful** to him, and he wasn't about to simply let Jesus pass by without **experiencing** that mercy. Our text continues, "*Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!'*" The large crowd of people who were following Jesus would soon witness a great **miracle**. Jesus called Bartimaeus over to Him, and with a word from His **mouth** and a touch of His **hand**, Jesus restored **sight** to Bartimaeus' **blind** eyes - a great **miracle**. However, we should note that the even **greater** miracle, was the one which Bartimaeus had **already** experienced. The Bible tells us, "*No one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit!*" No one can, by his **own** thinking or choosing, can **believe** in **Jesus** the way **Bartimaeus** did. Bartimaeus believed that Jesus was his **Savior**. Because he **sought** mercy from the Lord, he also **received** mercy from Him. Jesus told him, "*Your faith has healed you*" - literally, your faith has **saved** you.

In reality, we have **all** been saved by our faith in **Jesus** - a faith that we couldn't have **had**, without the Holy Spirit **giving** it to us. Until God **opened our eyes**, and made us His children by **cleansing** us with Jesus' blood, we were **blind** to our desperate **need** for a Savior. We were virtually unable to **see** the **awfulness** of our sins. We were unable to see the **agony**, the **suffering**, and the cruel **death** on the cross which our sins would **inflict** on God's innocent Son. But through that **miracle** of faith - a miracle which the Lord Jesus has performed in **each one** of us - we can now **see** our spiritual plight **clearly**. And just as **Bartimaeus** did, we can come to Jesus with bold and persistent cries for His **mercy**.

I'm sure you have heard people say, "I never would have made it through this **tragedy** without my faith in **Jesus**" - perhaps you've even said it **yourself**. But that's one of the **benefits** of our faith in **this** life - to bring us the **comfort** and **assurance** of Jesus' healing **power** whenever we **need** it. Nevertheless, there are still countless people in the world whose souls are in extreme **danger** - who are

walking around in spiritual **blindness** - people who are **suffering**, because they **don't know** about their Savior. What about **them**? What about their **children**? Jesus loves **them**, just as much as He loves **us**, and He doesn't want **any** of them to be **lost**, and to suffer eternally in **hell**. Jesus wants **everyone** in the **world** to know the **comfort** and **assurance** of His healing power.

Unfortunately, we don't always **share** Jesus' compassion with those who are **lost** and **suffering**, even though Jesus **calls** His followers, including **us**, to **share** the healing message of the Gospel. **Someone** had shared that message with **Bartimaeus**, and it made a tremendous **difference** in his life. We're told in our text, "*Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.*" Bartimaeus **followed** Jesus on His way to **Jerusalem** - maybe even all the way to Calvary's **cross**. And Bartimaeus **followed** Jesus, because he believed that Jesus was his **Savior**. That's what **we** believe **too**, and so we **also** follow Jesus. But the fact of the matter is that we don't **have** to follow Jesus to the **cross**. His work there has already been completely **accomplished**. The suffering is **done**, the cure for sin has been **earned**, and it's time for the **healing** to begin. **What** healing? The short-term answer to that question will be **different** for everyone, because as I said at the beginning, the **hurts** and **problems** which we experience in our lives are vastly **different**. For **Bartimaeus**, it was **physical** blindness. Whatever it is for **you**, throw aside your **cloak**, jump to your **feet**, and come to **Jesus**, because in **every** instance, **Jesus** is **The One Who Heals** - both **now**, as well as for all **eternity**. Amen.