

Hayward United Methodist Church

Pastor Samuel's Message for the Twenty-First Sunday After Pentecost, October 17, 2021

"Let Me See Again"

Text: Mark 10:46-52

Gospel Reading: Mark 10:49-52 (NRSV)

And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; rise, he is calling you." And throwing off his mantle 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, "Master, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

Prayer for Illumination (UMH 6)

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that, as the Scriptures are read and your word proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Gospel writers chose to record important stories about Jesus. Jesus ministered in Galilee for three and half years. The Gospel writers did not give what Jesus did each of those years. They were selective in putting the stories together. They focused on Jesus's teachings, ministry, and his interaction with the people. Not all miracles Jesus performed were included in the Gospels. Likewise not all parables Jesus taught were mentioned in the Gospels. As a whole they highlighted the life and ministry of Jesus. The Four Gospels look at Jesus from four different perspectives. Even if a story of Jesus is found in all four or three Gospels, that story is seen from four view points. It is important to look at all parallel stories to comprehend the message.

The Gospel of Mark records another encounter when Jesus and his disciples are on the way to Jerusalem. Jesus is set his face toward Jerusalem where he would face the cross. In Mark the disciples very often misunderstand the ministry of Jesus. They did not expect Jesus to die on the cross. Whenever Jesus talked about his death and resurrection, the disciples couldn't understand what he was talking

about it. Even Peter did not want Jesus to die on the cross. But Jesus determined to teach the disciples his suffering, death, and resurrection. Jesus came to Jericho which was about eighteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. The setting for the parable of the Good Samaritan is Jericho. Zacchaeus, the tax-collector came from Jericho. As the Israelites entered Canaan, the first city to be conquered was Jericho. It has got lot of history. Jesus was simply passing through Jericho. A large crowd was following him. Jesus encounters a blind man by name Bartimaeus. This story is also found in Mt 20:29-34 and Lk 18:35-43. It is good to read the parallels to see what each Gospel writer is trying to convey.

First, the Blind Man knew lot about Jesus. Jesus's encounter with the blind man takes place as Jesus was leaving Jericho. By the roadside lay a blind man by name Bartimaeus. Most of the miracle stories are anonymous. No name is given to those who got healed by Jesus. This is the only story that has a name. Bartimaeus was blind and he was healed by Jesus. Though he was blind, he knew lot about Jesus. Probably he was blind from birth. He was reduced to poverty. He couldn't work for living. Probably he lived with his parents. Everyday someone would bring him to the roadside to beg. He was not only blind, but he was a beggar also. His future was taken away. There was no cure back then for blindness. The blind had to depend on others for survival. Bartimaeus had no hope for the future. He would spend rest of his life in begging.

Somehow Bartimaeus knew who Jesus was. Probably his parents told him about Jesus of Nazareth. They told him about how he healed the blind. They told him how he fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. They told him how he healed the lepers. They told him how he even raised the dead. Bartimaeus heard about his teachings as well. He was expecting that Jesus would establish the Kingdom of David. He was expecting to meet Jesus someday. Have you heard about Jesus before you would come to him? Have you read about Jesus before you would believe him as Lord? God works in a mysterious way. God prepares us ahead so that we could come to the right person. Bartimaeus was longing to meet Jesus. He knew what he would ask him when he met him. His hope was about to fulfilled.

One day, there was a great commotion. He never heard it in his whole life or at least the time he started begging. People were shouting. He could hear many people walking and running. He could feel it. What was it all about? He inquired

about it. Someone told him that it was Jesus of Nazareth. As soon as he heard his name, he knew that he was going to meet a Savior. Will he get close to Jesus? Will the crowd pave the way for him to come to Jesus? Will Jesus stop to listen to his cry? Probably he had all those questions. Anyhow he wanted to give a try.

Bartimaeus cried, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me?” He knew that God sent the expected Messiah. Jesus was the Son of David who would show mercy to his people and rule with justice and righteousness. No one ever called Jesus as the Son of David before. This is the first time in Mark’s Gospel a blind man calling Jesus as the Son of David. Not even the disciples recognized Jesus as the Son of David. Bartimaeus had the insight to proclaim Jesus as the Son of David. Many in the crowd ordered him to be quiet. Probably the crowd thought that Bartimaeus was looking for some help from Jesus. Jesus and his disciples did not possess any money to give to him. But Bartimaeus was persistent. He cried even louder to draw Jesus’s attention. The question is how much we know about Jesus? We have all resources to know about him? Do we know him personally as God’s Son?

Second, Jesus stopped to meet Bartimaeus. There were people shouting and making noise. It was difficult to hear someone standing on the wayside and calling out to Jesus. The disciples were talking to Jesus as well. But Jesus heard the cry of Bartimaeus. Jesus knew it was genuine. Jesus knew that it was no ordinary cry. Bartimaeus already expressed his faith in Jesus as the Son of David. He was calling for mercy. Jesus had compassion for the people. He already knew what Bartimaeus was looking for him. He knew that Bartimaeus was blind from birth.

Jesus stopped for a moment. He asked the disciples to call for Bartimaeus. No one expected that Jesus would perform a miracle. It was simply said that he was encouraged to be brought to Jesus. Probably the disciples thought that Jesus would comfort him or perhaps give him something to eat. As soon as Bartimaeus was brought to Jesus, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He called Jesus as the Son of David. Bartimaeus could have asked Jesus as to when he was going to establish the Kingdom of David. Bartimaeus could have asked for some money. Bartimaeus could have asked for some food. Bartimaeus had every opportunity to ask anything he wanted.

Bartimaeus said to Jesus, “My teacher, let me see again.” Here Bartimaeus addressed Jesus as Teacher. He heard about Jesus’s teachings that one should love one’s neighbor. He heard about Jesus’s teachings on the arrival of God’s Kingdom. Jesus was both Son of David and Teacher. Bartimaeus already believed that Jesus had the power to heal any disease. So Bartimaeus wanted to be healed. He wanted his eyesight back so that he could see the Son of David who is standing in front of him. He wanted his hope to be realized in Jesus. All these years he was longing to meet Jesus. The moment arrived.

Jesus said to him, “Go, your faith has made you well.” In Greek, it is “Go, your faith has saved you.” Jesus knew that Bartimaeus had a strong faith. Jesus knew that Bartimaeus recognized him as the Son of David and Teacher. In his cry Bartimaeus expressed faith in Jesus as the Savior. No further statement was needed. Jesus immediately healed him. Bartimaeus immediately regained his eyesight. He was able to see. He was able to see the Son of David.

Bartimaeus could have walked away as soon as he got his eyesight back. He could said thank you to Jesus and gone home. But Bartimaeus did not turn away. In fact he began to follow Jesus on the way. He went with Jesus to Jerusalem. Probably he witnessed Jesus’s crucifixion. He knew that Jesus died for the sinners. Bartimaeus became a follower of Jesus.

Jesus passes by everyday. Are you looking for him? Are you crying out to him? Jesus hears our cries. No matter how others are trying to silence you. He determines to stop and calls us to him. He asks the same question he asked Bartimaeus. “What do you want me to do for you?” What will you say to Jesus? Jesus has the power to give to us what we need. He comes to heal us. He comes to save us. He comes to give us eternal life.

God Bless.

Pastor Samuel

**Let’s say the Benediction together:
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with us all. Amen.**