

THE GOSPEL LESSON Mark 10:46-52

(A blind man looks to Jesus for mercy and receives his sight.)

46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. **47** When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

48 Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

49 Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you."

50 Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

51 "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

52 "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. (NIV)

INTRO - On Thursday I was in Anchorage. I went to the doctor, but I also visited another pastor, and went to visit someone in hospital. But, while I was there I also stopped to shop at Penny's for some new gloves. As I was approaching the store a man approached me, 'Hey bud, how about \$1.75. I need to catch a bus.' Now, I have a policy that while I help people, I don't give money. I've seen too many use it for alcohol or drugs. I often go with the person and pay for what they ask, but this time I was in a hurry to get back to Palmer, and told the man 'no.' But, as the man left and I walked into the store, I wished I had taken the time to go to the bus stop with him. You know, in spite of the man's problems, he was created by my heavenly Father. He was forgiven by the blood and death of my Savior. And I couldn't find time to help him out.

I. Do you see how the people of Jericho treated Bartimaeus.

A. Yes, Bartimaeus was an outcast for a number of reasons.

1. He was blind.

2. He was a beggar - though, what else could a blind man do in those

days?

3. And, Bartimaeus was embarrassing others with his loud cries to Jesus.

B. So, they told him to be silent. **Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet,**

1. Stop calling to the one who might help you.

2. Stop putting Jesus on the spot.

3. Do you realize that in keeping Bartimaeus from Jesus, they were keeping him from the Savior? I'm not sure they thought of this either.

C. Who have you rejected? Who have you not had time for? Who have you neglected to share Jesus with?

1. Sometimes when children act out, they need scolding. But, sometimes they are looking for attention they haven't gotten elsewhere. Have you ever asked a young person who seems troubled, 'how are you doing?'

2. Sometimes when people are ill, or elderly, or handicapped, they may be slow, or take more attention. Do you ever purposefully walk around them so you don't have to help them?

3. Sometimes people who have been through a rough life, well, maybe they brought it on themselves, or maybe not. But, they need Jesus too. Though a person looks rough doesn't mean they don't need someone to pat them on the back, or listen, or offer a helping hand.

4. Who have you neglected to share Jesus with? Sometimes we hurt people, or they think we reject them, and we don't even know it.

D. Do you know that sometimes when we reject others, it affects those who watch as well? Linda Frazier was a very active young teenager in my first church. One day we were on the church bus collecting papers to raise money, and an old black man, Ozzie, stopped and asked me for money. Now, Linda did not know that Ozzie had come to me at my house. First he needed help because his wife had died, and I helped. Then he needed help because his wife had pneumonia. Only, I remembered that she was supposed to be dead, and didn't help. He threatened to choke me, but he was old and couldn't do it. Later he had asked me for money to buy some chewing tobacco, and when I offered him some of mine, he walked away with his head down. Now, this Ozzie wanted some

money for something that day, and I told him, knowing what I had experienced with him, 'not now.' Linda was hurt. I'm not sure I ever saw her in church again.

II. Now look at the actions of Jesus.

A. Everyone else was telling Bartimaeus to be quiet.

1. Jesus stopped what he was doing. Don't you think what Jesus was doing was important? He was on his way to Jerusalem to save the world. But, on the way, he had time to stop and care for a blind man, a beggar.
2. Others were telling Bartimaeus to be quiet, to 'shut up.' Jesus talked to him, and asked him a question. **"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.**
3. And, Jesus cared for him.
 - A. He gave the blind man his sight.
 - B. He encouraged him in his faith. **"your faith has healed you."**
 - C. And, the blind man followed Jesus along the road.
 - D. Others were telling Bartimaeus to 'get lost.' But Jesus, the son of God, took time for him, and thus showed he was important.

B. I don't know if you know that Jesus has done that for you.

1. Our sins, our selfishness, our disobedience, our rebellion, our lack of love is a way that we reject God who made us and saved us.
2. But God sent his Son from Heaven.
3. The Son of God did not say it was too much to live and die and rise for us.
4. And, in spite of our rejection of God, God is constantly calling us, Just like he did with Bartimaeus. He calls us in Baptism. He calls us His Word. He calls us in His love.

C. And guess what, when others have rejected us, when other Christians have failed us, God is always there with his love. **NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD!**

III. The story of Bartimaeus should help us to help others in need.

A. If we are tempted to look down on others, first we should remember how God could look at us. He could reject us for our sin, but instead he saved us with the sacrifice of His son. We have no reason to look down on others.

B. Secondly, that person who seems unworthy of our attention is someone Jesus died for, just like he died and rose for me, and for you.

CONCLUSION - I got a story by e-mail from one of our members the other day, that maybe gives us a chance to think of helping others.

Come with me to a third grade classroom.....There is a nine_year_old boy sitting at his desk and all of a sudden, there is a puddle between his feet and the front of his pants are wet. He thinks his heart is going to stop because he cannot possibly imagine how this has happened. It's never happened before, and he knows that when the boys find out he will never hear the end of it. When the girls find out, they'll never speak to him again as long as he lives. The boy believes his heart is going to stop; he puts his head down and prays this prayer, "Dear God, this is an emergency! I need help now! Five

minutes from now I'm dead meat." He looks up from his prayer and here comes the teacher with a look in her eyes that says he has been discovered. As the teacher is walking toward him, a classmate named Susie is carrying a goldfish bowl that is filled with water. Susie trips in front of the teacher and inexplicably dumps the bowl of water in the boy's lap. The boy pretends to be angry, but all the while is saying to himself, "Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Lord!" Now all of a sudden, instead of being the object of ridicule, the boy is the object of sympathy. The teacher rushes him downstairs and gives him gym shorts to put on while his pants dry out. All the other children are on their hands and knees cleaning up around his desk. The sympathy is wonderful. But as life would have it, the ridicule that should have been his has been transferred to someone else _ Susie. She tries to help, but they tell her to get out. You've done enough, you klutz!" Finally, at the end of the day, as they are waiting for the bus, the boy walks over to Susie and whispers, "You did that on purpose, didn't you?" Susie whispers back, "I wet my pants once too." Who do you know that others have rejected, but to whom you can show the love of Jesus?

