

Worship@Home 27th October 2024 With Revd David Speirs

Opening Prayer:

God, we give You thanks for the gift of life and for the gift of family and friends.

We give You thanks for Your provisions and for Your guidance in our lives.

We are grateful for the many moments in our lives when we have called on Your name and You have answered us. Just as You heard Job, David, and Bartimaeus when they called upon Your name, we know too well that You will continue to hear our prayers. Thank You for Your faithfulness. Amen

Prayer written by the Revd Everisto Musedza and taken from the Church of Scotland Weekly Worship (Sunday 27 October 2024, Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost – Year B). at:

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/weekly-worship/monthly/2024-october/sunday-27-october-2024-twenty-third-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b>

STF 451 – Open the eyes of my heart Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExCJH2-Q7Hs>

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,
open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,
open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up,
shining in the light of your glory.
Pour out your power and love;
as we sing holy, holy, holy.

Holy, holy, holy,
holy, holy, holy,
holy, holy, holy,
I want to see you.

By Paul Baloche. Words and Music © 1997 Integrity Music.
Administered by worshiptogether.com Songs, excluding UK & Europe
administered by Kingswaysongs, a division of David C Cook.
CCLI Song Number: 2298355

Please read:

Mark 10:46-52

<https://bible.oremus.org/?q1=215210212>

Time to Reflect

Bartimaeus is one of the poorest and most marginalised members of his society. Unable to see, he is forced to beg on the road outside the city of Jericho and is entirely dependent on those who would toss him coins.

The passage that we have today is not the first healing of a blind person in Mark's gospel. However, compared to Jesus' previous healing of a blind person in Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26) there are some significant differences that emerge.

In Bethsaida the blind man is brought to Jesus by a group of people, most likely friends or family. In the reading that we have today many in the crowd actively try to silence and dismiss an isolated Bartimaeus as he initially cries out to Jesus for help. In Bethsaida Jesus touches the blind man to heal him. In today's reading Jesus announces that Bartimaeus' faith has enabled his healing. In today's passage, Jesus asks Bartimaeus about his needs, while in Bethsaida, there is no discussion prior to the healing taking place. There is also no Christological confession in Bethsaida whilst in today's reading Bartimaeus confesses Jesus as the Son of David right from the outset.

The significant differences between the two healings are important when you consider where this encounter takes place in Mark's gospel. The story follows on from Jesus' teaching on entering the Kingdom of God which he makes clear, in his conversation with the young rich man, involves a giving up of material wealth and privilege for the benefit of the poor (Mark 10:17-31). It also involves serving others in humility (Mark 10:35-45). However, in giving up we receive so much more through our participation in God's Kingdom.

Bartimaeus is entirely dependent on begging for his income and his ability to serve others would have been limited. There was very little that he could afford to give up. The majority of Bartimaeus' time and energy would have been focused on daily survival and subsistence. The healing that he receives is transformative in the way that it empowers Bartimaeus.

Yet, since it was his faith that played a central part in his healing, Bartimaeus' new life is not something that is simply imposed upon him but a result of the outpouring of his own faith and the relationship that he initiates with Jesus.

In Bartimaeus story there is a much stronger sense of the dynamic empowerment that comes from a relationship with Jesus that relies on our response to God's grace.

While Bartimaeus would be extremely poor he possessed one item of value: his cloak. The cloak would have provided Bartimaeus with warmth and shelter in cold and wet weather, a covering to sleep on, and could be used to collect money on the street. In short, it would have been essential to his survival. The abandonment of the cloak in the encounter with Jesus (Mark 10:35) and the implication that it may have been left behind when Bartimaeus gets up follows Jesus is hugely significant. Bartimaeus is letting go and giving up the most valuable thing he owns. This fits with what Jesus has already declared in Mark's Gospel; that giving up and letting go is integral to discipleship and the way of the Kingdom.

As the passage starts with Bartimaeus sitting on the side of the road, stuck and static, it ends with him dynamically walking with and following Jesus on the road. The questions that we might therefore ask ourselves, based on this reading, is how our faith in Christ might enable us to give up and let go? Are we able to embrace the gift that God offers us in Christ so that our lives might be empowered and transformed for service in his Kingdom?

Prayer of Intercession

You are invited to pray silently for:
The needs of the world...
The Church and its calling...
Loved ones going through difficult times...
For peace, justice, and reconciliation...
In Jesus name. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

StF 364 – O For a thousand tongues to sing

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFJvBwgmK_c

O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!

My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of your name.

Jesus — the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean,
his blood availed for me.

He speaks; and, listening to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice;
the humble poor believe.

See all your sins on Jesus laid:
the Lamb of God was slain;
his soul was once an offering made
that all may heaven gain.

In Christ, our Head, you then shall know,
shall feel, your sins forgiven,
anticipate your heaven below,
and own that love is heaven.

By Charles Wesley (1707 -1788)

Final Prayer

Gracious God, break our hearts for what
breaks yours. Forgive us for hearts that are
sometimes cold with indifference. Forgive us
for hearts sometimes hard with intractability.
Forgive us for hearts closed with isolation.
Open our hearts fully to compassion and
companionship with our neighbour and your
vision of a beloved kingdom come. Amen.

Prayer written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay in 'Take Heart:
Service Prayers for the Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost Year B'
United Church of Christ © 2024. Accessed at:
<https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-23b-october-27/>