

Text: Mark 10:46-52

Theme: Have Mercy!

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the tenth chapter, verses forty-six through fifty-two.

Boys and Girls how are you doing this morning? Excellent. Did you know that you have two voices? Yep, you do. We have our quieter inside voice that we use when we are around other people. We also have our louder outside voices that we like to use when we play outside or need to be really loud. Do you guys like to be loud? Really?! In our text for today, we see a man named Bartimaeus who is loud, so loud that he does not let people silence him. Let's see what he's shouting about and how it point us to Jesus. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Our Lord is leaving Jericho, headed up the ascent towards Jerusalem, heading towards His suffering and death on our behalf. In the midst of the happy crowds alongside Him, Jesus stops still, hearing a man crying out. That cry is from Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus is a poor, blind beggar laying near the city gates. He is crying out for help, for mercy. Bartimaeus is unable to read. He knows only that which he has been told. He has heard that Jesus is passing by and he cries out. Mark D. Davis says of Bartimaeus, "The last time someone shouted

outside of Jericho, the walls fell down." Indeed, so true here, when faced with the One who is greater than Joshua of old.

Jesus hears Bartimaeus' cry of "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy!" and bids Bartimaeus to come to him. Bartimaeus acts with quickness and assuredness. He throws off his cloak, tossing it beside him and rushes to our Lord. Jesus asks him what he desires. He was sure that the Son of David could help him and he did not doubt that the Messiah would help him. Bartimaeus says, Rabboni, that my eyes might be opened." Jesus says to him, "Go your way, your faith has made you well." Immediately the miracle was performed and the former blind man now joins the disciples and follows Jesus as He went on His way toward Jerusalem.

Bartimaeus cry is our cry even today. "Lord, have mercy." We offer up this prayer each time we are gathered here, regardless of whether we are celebrating the Divine Service, praying Matins, or Vespers. His prayer is the basis of the Kyrie: "Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us." His prayer reflected our Prayer of the Church as we conclude each petition, saying, "Lord in Your mercy, hear our prayer."

We, like Bartimaeus, cry out for mercy because of what we are. Because of our sinful nature, we are blind beggars just as he was. Our eyes do not see as well as they once did. For some of us, our eyes have never seen well, and we need stronger prescriptions for our glasses. Making moves that were once simple are now more difficult, and in some cases, almost impossible, as arthritis and the effects of old age begin to take their tolls on us. Our bodies are not perfect. We lack a clean bill of health because we each have a deadly disease that ravages us.

This disease is called sin. The disease is congenital. Our condition is terminal. We were conceived and born in sin. We are by nature sinful and unclean, sinning against God by thought, word, and deed. God, our great Physician, has given us the prescription for living a spiritually healthy life: the Ten Commandments. Yet these tablets that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai are bitter pills for us to swallow. When we feel some pain inside us or when we hurt ourselves, we tell ourselves that we are fine, that the pain will soon pass. That physical pain can come and go, but sometimes it does not. Even if the pain does not subside, we do not like to seek treatment for our ailments. This is even truer when dealing with our sinful condition. We think we are in good shape. We forget about God, the only One who can bring about healing for our souls, the One from whom we receive healing for our bodies. Seeing our pain, grieving over our many great and grievous sins, we cry out to God and Christ to have mercy upon us.

Our Lord does indeed have mercy upon us. In His mercy, Jesus asks Bartimaeus a pointed question, “What do you want me to do for you?” Bartimaeus asked to see. The Father’s answer? Die. At Jerusalem, He is betrayed into the hands of sinful men. He is crucified on the cross, showing to us mercy by praying as He suffers, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” He suffers, bleeds, and dies, taking upon Himself all of our sins and pays the price for them on our behalf as He cries out “It is finished.” Every single one of our sins are forgiven. Jesus rises from the dead, proving that our sins are forgiven, restores us body and soul, and gives to us new life.

In the newness of life granted to us, we recognize our sins, cry out and receive mercy and forgiveness for them. With the

help of the Holy Spirit, we seek to do the good things that God has given us to do, while resisting our sinful nature. We live out our lives purely in the mercy of God. We run to God for help when trials and temptations come upon us. We face the challenges of this life, the aches and pains of the body, looking forward to that Day when all will be made new again.

As Luther wrote, “We are beggars this is true.” Dear Christian, constantly keep begging, for the grace and mercy of your Lord all your days.

May the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.