



Grain

"Being Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively seeking God's will." Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Field

⁴⁶They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁹Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." ⁵⁰So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. ⁵¹Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again." ⁵²Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way. Mark 10:46-52

Thoughts

The expression, "Hold my beer," is a prelude to a person about to do something daring, outrageous, or ridiculous. I first noticed the saying in a news article about a surfer in Hawaii saving a woman from being pulled under by ocean waves. The surfer turned to his wife and said, "Hold my beer" and then sprang into action, which was caught on video. I thought of the expression when reading about Bartimaeus throwing off his cloak and walking toward Jesus. I'd like to imagine the man who was blind saying, "Hold my cloak, I'm going in." But in a crowd of people trying to silence him he probably just threw his garment to the ground. It seemed like a grand gesture. Perhaps he would pick it up later or maybe he shed it completely as a sign of leaving behind his isolation and poverty.

But what prompted Bartimaeus to refuse the stern admonishment of the crowd and to instead speak up more boldly? How did he even so clearly realize Jesus' identity? Unlike in many instances involving the disciples, who had been with Jesus all along but still had trouble fathoming him, Bartimaeus immediately had insight into Jesus' identity. It could have only been God's grace and Bartimaeus' faith response at work. Following his faith was more important than the crowd's fickle insistence of who was an outsider, or the uncertainty of what might lie ahead in Jerusalem.

Instead of engaging with the Gospel lesson as a story about grace and faith it is easy to get lost in the particulars of how one person was healed, and then contrast that with how we or others may not have been helped. Being cured of his blindness was one aspect of Bartimaeus' healing. Unfortunately, in parts of history, the church has been overtly exclusive of people who remained disabled, that is, who continued with challenges that are obvious for others to perceive. But we all remain broken and experience healing, though not in every manner.

The healing common for all of us is an expanded vision of God's kingdom that challenges how the world divides. With grace, let us live into a church that throws off its cloak and steps forward. Happy Monday!

Share

Send any quotes you'd like to share with our network to cindyc@loppw.org

All Monday Quotes found under the Resources & Advocacy Tools tab at www.loppw.org

Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy