

Sermon on Healing Bartimaeus

Today is also called Reformation Sunday.

The religious movement in the 16th century that had one goal: the reform of the Roman Church at that time. This movement was finally led to the establishment of the Protestant churches.

Many believe that we can summarize the reformation idea to two main beliefs:

1. There is no gate and veil between God and the worshipper.
2. The life of God is in the souls and hearts of Human beings.

Now, we may apply these two ideas to our Gospel reading today.

A blind beggar, Bartimaeus, hears that Jesus is close to him, walking beside the road. Bartimaeus screams and says to Jesus: Son of David, have mercy on me. The people who are around, order Bartimaeus to be silent. But Bartimaeus screams louder and says Son of David, have mercy on me.

In those days, beggars used to live in the street and they were dependent on peoples' mercy. They did not have any possessions, any family, any goal, any future plans. They were satisfied to receive a piece of bread to survive. This is what we read in the ancient literature and history.

But, Bartimaeus is a little bit different from other beggars. He is also a blind man. His life is limited to sitting and begging for food. But, his financial problem does not stop him from being different.

Bartimaeus is alert and awake. In spite of his blindness, he is totally aware of what is happening around him. And because he has no attachments, he has a free spirit.

He is not afraid of anything: losing face, shyness, or bad reputation. He has already heard of Jesus. By hearing about Jesus, Bartimaeus has come to believe that Jesus is the Son of David that means: the Messiah.

This is the reason why Bartimaeus screams and says to Jesus: Son of David, have mercy on me.

By saying this sentence, Bartimaeus is saying three things to Jesus:

1. You are the Messiah,
2. You are able to do wonderful things,
3. And I know that you are going to listen to me despite of other people's interference and negative attitude.

The second time that Bartimaeus screams, Jesus asks him: What do you want me to do for you?

Bartimaeus' answer is exceptional. He does not ask Jesus: Son of David, make me rich, feed me, cover me, make me your especial disciple, let me share your glory, or help me to feel important and respectful.

Bartimaeus says something different, he says: My master, I want to see.

First, he accepts Jesus as his master, and this means that he is the freest man in the world:

A man without attachment whose master is Jesus Christ.

Then, he says that he wants to see.

He wants to see in order to get a new life. He is telling Jesus: let me see, and I will take care of the rest. Bartimaeus wants to experience a new life with open eyes. He can see now, and he follows Jesus.

The reformation movement had two main beliefs:

The first was: There is no gate and veil between God and worshipper.

When Bartimaeus screams, the people try to put a gate and veil between Bartimaeus and Jesus and prevent them from communicating. In Bartimaeus' case, the negativity comes from outside, other people. But sometimes negativity comes from inside: our own pessimism, negativity, and lack of faith.

But, Bartimaeus, in spite of all kinds of barriers screams louder, and Jesus does whatever Bartimaeus asks.

The second main belief of the reformation was:

The life of God is in the souls and hearts of Human beings.

When we come to believe in God's presence in our soul and hearts, then it will not be hard to get what we want from God and we will be able to get a new life.

Bartimaeus is aware of God's presence in his soul. This is the reason why he keeps screaming until he gets what he has asked for.

Bartimaeus acknowledges that Jesus is Son of David, the messiah, and he persists to communicate with Jesus.

Bartimaeus teaches us three lessons about communicating with God:

Having deep and strong faith in Jesus, the messiah

Being always positive, joyful, and eager when we are speaking with Jesus

And, screaming loud to remove all barriers until we get what we want.

Let us prayer:

Lord Jesus, we praise your name and we shout out with joy for your presence in our lives, and for the anointing power of Your Holy Spirit, which is helping us to go deeper in your truths. We turn our eyes to the heavens, anticipating new wisdom and deeper insights into your sacred teachings. Amen