

Lent Day 33
Friday March 18, 2016
Toronto, Ontario

Reading: Mark 10.46-52

Reflection

During my trip to Sri Lanka I met a young man named Reginald. Reginald is an independent pastor who is considering bringing his church into relationship with the Free Methodist Church. Reginald was a promising Bible College student, hoping to pursue a Ph.D, until he woke up one morning without sight. After a time of fasting and praying for his sight to be restored, he regained 50% (maybe less) in one eye. At that point life seemed over for him so he attempted suicide — three times. Sight's an important thing isn't it?

As we have been tracking through the Gospel of Mark we have seen a theme of sight and blindness with the disciples. They have eyes but do not see. But suddenly we have Bartimaeus seems to be without eyes but can see. He uses the term "Son of David" to speak of Jesus — it's the first use in the Gospel. This term is steeped in the political hopes of Israel to have the Messiah come, the king who would be the true heir of King David and who would sit on David's throne forever. The religious leaders and disciples cannot see, don't understand (even when explicitly told) but, somehow, blind Bartimaeus does.

More than that, he seems to know that with the coming of God's king (Messiah/Christ) would come healing and restoration. Have mercy on me! It seems crazy that Jesus needs to ask what he wants. But look how — unlike the rich man earlier — Bartimaeus throws away his clock which is all that he had; perhaps another who was poor picked it up. And see how he then follows Jesus. Mark is weaving his story well.

You and I have eyes, but do we see. We take for granted that sight is important and that we want to use our eyes, but that isn't always the case. Do you **really** want to see? Or do you just want eyes? Do you really want to see yourself as you actually are? Do you want to see the world as it actually is? Do you really want to see without the blindness of the world pulled over your eyes?

Obviously Reginald was unsuccessful at suicide — thank God. He received a different call to plant churches. He has done that overcoming some terrific odds and persecution while doing it. And in his faithfulness God has blessed him. He met and married a woman who helps him with his work, this is unheard of in his culture, as he is considered damaged goods. More than that, they have a beautiful child together. Reginald concluded his story to me, "before I was blind, but now I truly see."

Prayer

God who restores sight to the blind, grant to us eyes to see. We recognize that to truly see is going to be painful and difficult, but we seek your healing anyway, so we might follow you. Amen.