

Scripture Reading:

Luke 18: “31 Then [Jesus] took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. 32 For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. 33 They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." 34 But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.35 Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. 36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. 37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. 38 And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, 41 saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." 42 Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." 43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.”

"Seeing With Eyes of Faith"

Our passage this morning follows the account of the rich young ruler who has gone away saddened by the challenge of the Gospel.

- **Luke tells us that Jesus then turns to give His disciples some further details concerning what is about to happen when they arrive in the City of Jerusalem**

This discussion comes just before the account of Jesus healing the blind men which we will look at more closely in a moment.

- **But first we must learn an important & humbling lesson:**
- **God gives His revelation and understanding according to His timetable and not ours:**

Certainly the disciples needed to understand what was about to happen in Jerusalem where Jesus was going to be the one sacrifice for the sins of His people. Soon, they would be given the task of taking this Good News to all the nations of the earth, and yet we read in verse 34: “But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.”

- **Very humbling indeed!**

- The disciples have learned that it is impossible for children to be saved without the intervention of the Holy Spirit
- The disciples have learned that it is impossible for a rich man to be saved, and by implication all grown men and women, unless there is intervention by God the Holy Spirit!
- And now Luke reminds us that we are dependent on God not only for our salvation, but for all the wisdom and knowledge He will give us in this life.
- When the blind man cries out, Jesus again takes advantage of a precious teaching moment to further instruct the disciples, and all of us, about how everything God reveals and gives us **MUST** be seen with the eyes of faith!

We have talked about how Luke has three major sections in his orderly account:

- In chapters one through nine we see the advent of Jesus and His ministry in Galilee
- In verse 51 of chapter nine, we read: “when the time had come for Him to be received up, that [Jesus] steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,” This journey is described in chapters ten through nineteen
- Jesus then enters Jerusalem and the remainder of Luke’s Gospel covers the final days of our Lord’s earthly ministry in Jerusalem and then His trial, His death, burial, & resurrection and His ascension to the Father’s right hand

We are approaching the end of this final journey to Jerusalem and Lord-willing we will have Jesus entering Jerusalem before we begin the Advent season this year. So, in our text for this morning, Jesus takes His disciples aside to explain the importance of what Jesus will do in Jerusalem: Luke 18: “31 Then [Jesus] took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished.”

- All that was about to happen had been foretold by the Prophets!

32 “For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. 33 They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” Jesus when confronting the religious leaders in John 5 said to them, “39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.”

- How well do we know our Bibles? Can we find the passages in the Old Testament that preach the Gospel?
- Where they speak of Jesus being delivered to the Gentiles, being mocked, spit upon, scourged killed and His resurrection?
- Great homework: Begin with the four **MOST** quoted Old Testament Books: Genesis; Deuteronomy; Psalms & Isaiah!

34 “But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.”

- **This is stunning from our human perspective...**
- **How could they not understand??**
- **They have been with Jesus for over three years**
- **He has reminded them about what will happen in Jerusalem many times**
- **Peter was rebuked for speaking as Satan when he denied these things**

Obviously, much of this is going to change after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost: *Suddenly Peter will be mostly bold and seldom wrong!*

BUT we must also see that there was a certain hardness of heart among even the disciples that demonstrated a certain lack of faith. We can see, even BEFORE Pentecost, accounts of God’s people having the eyes of faith:

- **On the road to Emmaus the disciples have their hearts burn within them as Jesus explains all that had just happened from the Old Testament**
- **We see Thomas cry “my Lord & my God” when he is confronted with the resurrected Jesus**
- **We will see Peter using the Old Testament to explain what happened to Judas and why he is to be replaced among the Apostles**
- **The eyes of faith can see even when it is through a glass darkly as all of the Old Testament Saints had to do!**

We have often talked about the great faith that Simeon had as he held the little baby Jesus believing all that the Old Testament said about Him.

- **We sing his prayer at the close of each worship service remembering that we are to go forth with the same eyes of faith**
- **Well, here in Luke 18, we meet another man with eyes of faith... and he is blind!**

35 “Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. 36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. 37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.”

- **We know from Mark’s Gospel that his name was Bartimeus**
- **We know from Matthew’s Gospel that there was another blind man with him at the time**
- **What we know from all three accounts is what he proclaimed in faith: “And [the blind man] cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”**

- His cry is like that of the publican who went home justified!
- Notice the title He gives Jesus: Not Jesus of Nazareth as he had been told, but rather he cries: “Jesus, Son of David!”

This man who was physically blind had heard the Bible with eyes of faith, believing that Jesus is the promised Messiah rightly calling Him the “Son of David” as predicted by the Prophets:

Jer 33:15 – “In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.”

Eze 34:23 – “I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them--My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken.”

Ho 3:5 - Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek Jehovah their God and David their king. They shall fear Jehovah and His goodness in the latter days.”

- This blind man has eyes of faith and sees who Jesus really is!

39 “Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet”

- Don’t bother Jesus He is doing important work!

This man proclaimed that this Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah, BUT he is treated like those little infants who were brought in faith to be blessed by Jesus... But, this man’s faith would not be quieted: “he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" As we learned with the parable about persistent prayers, God hears the prayers of His people and...

40 “So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him.”

- As this faithful man is brought to Jesus we learn another important lesson about faith and prayer:

“And when he had come near, [Jesus] asked him, 41 saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

-- So kids what do you think the blind man wanted Jesus to do for him?

-- Do you think that Jesus knew he was blind?

- Jesus has given us the Lord’s prayer as a model prayer: Think about some of the things He tells us to pray for...

“Give us this day our daily bread”

- I think God knows that we need to eat each day: We pray this to remind us that it is God who gives us our food each and every day!

“Forgive us our sins”

- **God knows that we need our sins to be forgiven: He gave His only Son so they could be forgiven: And yet we are commanded to ask God to do so!**
- **And so Jesus wants this man to petition Him as the Savior to receive the obvious healing that he wants and needs.**

Bartimeus gives a simple reply: “He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight."

We see Jesus quickly respond:

42 “Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well."

- **That faith which cried to Jesus, calling Him the Son of David**
- **That faith which came to Jesus when he was called**
- **That faith which asked Jesus for the healing**

The faith that is now rewarded: Verse 43 “And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God.”

- **What a contrast to the disciples who are still wandering in much spiritual blindness having the truths that Jesus plainly shares with them still hidden from them.**
- **What a contrast with the rich young ruler with all his money and all his faculties and yet he walks away from Jesus with much sorrow!**
- **This blind man saw with the eyes of faith!**

The disciples and followers of Jesus tried to keep both the infants and the blind man away from Jesus...

- **BUT Jesus called both to Himself and blessed them!**
- **Jesus knew they had been given the gift of faith!**

The writer to the Hebrews says of faith, “1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”

- **This was the faith that was exercised by all those who follow in the great hall of faith in Hebrews chapter eleven!**
- **They MUST be our role models in our Christian walk**

We must believe that God is the great Triune God He has revealed Himself to be!

We must believe HE is the Creator of all things as He has revealed Himself to be: Creating ALL things from nothing... A bigger stumbling block for the skeptic than six day creation I might add!

We must believe He has done what He has promised:

- **Sending Jesus His own Son to die for our sins and be raised for our justification**
- **Sending the Holy Spirit who fills His Church with power & wisdom coming as our Comforter**
- **In sending forth the Bride,
His Church, with the Great Commission to disciple all the nations of the world**

John in his first Epistle shows how this new light from the eyes of faith should work itself out in our lives and warns against returning to the darkness of unbelief...

I John 2:1 “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins...

[remember this is what the publican and the blind man prayed for!]

2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

[because Peter said the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call!]

3 “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

[this is why we see the blind man following Jesus after he was healed!]

... Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

Jesus is the light of the world – Just as this blind man went from darkness to sight so it is with ALL of God’s Saints and it will change how we see everything!

9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

- **We must walk as those who have been given light!**
- **As those who can see with the eyes of faith**

Here is what Paul says when warning the Saints at Ephesus to stay away from the wickedness of the world: Ephesians 5:7 “Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Luke in the last sentence of this chapter makes one last observation, and leaves us with a warning as well:

43b “And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.”

Why is this a warning?

- Because Luke has consistently shown us how fickle these crowds can be as folks who have likely come for the show.

They represent the seeds that fell by the wayside: Choked in the weeds or parched on the rocks... Their faith is not saving faith and it will be short-lived.

Again, if we know our Old Testament, it does not surprise us to see unbelief among God’s people: Consider these words from Psalm 78 as Asaph recounts the unfaithfulness of God’s people at times in the history of Israel: After doubting God’s ability to feed them and give them drink we read these words:

Psalm 78:34 “34 When He slew them, then they sought Him; And they returned and sought earnestly for God. 35 Then they remembered that God was their rock, And the Most High God their Redeemer. 36 Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth, And they lied to Him with their tongue; 37 For their heart was not steadfast with Him, Nor were they faithful in His covenant.”

- We must NOT just be observers of what Jesus does for others
- We are to be participating: Like the children who were blessed and the blind man who was healed and followed Jesus

WE are to follow Jesus glorifying God as His Saints...

Just like Bartimeus, the blind man who saw with the eyes of faith!

Communion Meditation: Genesis 14:17-20

“And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him. 18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.”